COMFORT

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Telling one of Comforts Prize Stories.

$1200.00 PRIZE STORIES $1200.00

The following conditions govern the awarding of such prizes of $100 monthly for Nutshell Stories, and the manuscripts of such writers only as have complied with all these requirements will receive consideration.

All the necessary particulars being here clearly set forth, it will be useless for any one to seek further information or personal favors by addressing the editor, as such letters cannot be answered.

1. *Only persons who are regular paid up yearly subscribers to "Comfort" and who send with every manuscript at least two new yearly subscribers (together with 25 cents to pay for each subscriber so sent) may compete for the prizes.*

2. *All contributions must have the number of words they contain plainly noted thereon in addition to the writer's full name and address with nom de plume if desired; must be written on one side of the paper only, addressed to* EDITOR NUTSHELL STORY CLUB *care of* COMFORT, AUGUSTA, MAINE.

3. *All stories must be strictly original with the contributors, and must not have appeared in print before. Competitors may write upon any subject, whether based upon fact, fancy or fiction—of adventure, love, war, society or city or country life, or of experiences on land or sea—but no story must contain more than 2,000 or less than 1,000 words.*

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5. *The writer of the best original story will receive $30 cash; of the second best, $25 cash; of the third best, $20 cash; of the fourth best, $15 cash; and of the fifth best, $10 cash. Remittances will be sent by check as soon as awards have been made.*

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PRIZE WINNERS FOR AUGUST.

Frances Mallette Hawley, Bridgeport, Conn., First Prize.

L. S. Fowler, Stepney, Conn., Second Prize.

Charles Edward Barns, Flushing, L. I., Third Prize.

Mrs. Emma A. Lent, 1033 Howard St., Peekskill, N. Y., Fourth Prize.

Mrs. S. M. Maverick, Northport, N. Y., Fifth Prize.

THE LADY IN VELVET.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY FRANCES M. HAWLEY.

EVERY ONE has a "Fad" 'tis said, Fad'd defined, meaning craze on some one particular subject. Mine was velvet. I adored it!

I wore it in every possible way of dressing, and upon all occasions, but was not possessed of the means wherewith I could dress myself completely in it, as I would have liked to.

Jack Hamlin, my handsome young cousin —who by the way was only a third cousin, or I should never have consented to become his wife in the autumn—knowing my penchant for this luxurious fabric had mischievously declared, "It must be your wedding gown, Ethel."

"Too expensive, Jack," I answered laughingly.

"One can be allowed any extravagance at such a time," persisted Jack, and added, with a look of pride in his fine eyes as he turned me toward the mirror close by us: "There is a form that is well worthy of velvet and shall have it, too, if I can have anything to say about it."

"Nonsense, Jack dear," I said, blushingly turning from the glass and his fond gaze, "that is something I may think of, but in our poor circumstances it would be the height of folly for me, poor Ethel Deering, typewriter for McCadmus and Arthur, Attorneys at Law, etc., to be arrayed in white velvet! We determined on white, however, no matter what the material might be, you remember Jack?"

"Could I forget?" whispered my foolish lover, and added, with great earnestness and sincerity, "Some day you shall wear the white velvet, or any other color you choose. I am not always going to be a poor reporter on the 'American Rusher'! Just wait until my book comes out, the great American novel that people are waiting for the wise editor to publish."

"All things come to him who has patience to work and wait," I repeated with an encouraging smile. But at the same time I made the mental calculation, privately, that the much more simple cotton, or wool fabrics, in lieu of velvets, would have to do for many a year to come.

But what was so secondary a thing as dress to Jack and me? We had each other's honest and sincere love, and, with that as the propelling power in our lives, we could well do without the commodities that belong to the wealthy alone, and are often the only thing in their lives that bring them distraction and cover the aching, empty hearts beating beneath the silken gowns.

My time, however, was coming, the day when I should be arrayed in all my glory in the lovely fabric I loved. But under what terrible circumstances I was to wear it, I had never imagined, even in my wildest thoughts or dreams upon the subject.

It is with the hope of throwing some light on one of the strangest affairs that ever an ordinary, plain-going individual like myself was mixed up with, and of which I am still in ignorance of the *denouement*, that I give this strange story to the public. It may bring to me the last chapter in my novel experience, and save me from the insinuations of those who still believe I dreamed it all, while I know I did not.

It came about in this way—and when I have told you the true facts in the case, judge if I could have possibly dreamed it.

I had a week's vacation in the late autumn, and had accepted an invitation to spend it with my mother's sister, Aunt Maria, who lived in the city of T.— in the best of style, she having married Mr. Charles Holton, a wealthy banker, who was generous to a fault—and consequently it was a great pleasure for me to spend a week with my aunt and cousins Blanche and Olive Holton, and enjoy their lovely home and the luxurious living for even so brief a time. I loved all these things, but being a sensible girl I did not let it make me miserable—longing for what could not be mine.

Jack came to see me off at our little station, and put me aboard the train, with numberless injunctions to be careful of myself, intermingled with sundry other little speeches that were of no importance to anyone but my appreciative self.

"I wish I were going with you," he said, gloomily, among other things that all the world might hear. "I am so troubled with a fear that something will happen to you."

I laughed him out of his fears, although I would have liked to have had him go with me, as it was my first trip by this line. I had explicit directions where to change cars, and at the end of the route my aunt or cousins would meet me, so I had no fears.

Full of the excitement of youth and the delights of traveling, I enjoyed myself thoroughly, watching the scenery flyby by and the passengers as they entered at the various stations along the way.

At one I noticed a lady enter who at once attracted my attention by the beautiful suit of velvet she wore, of the loveliest shade of violet-blue, with mantle of the same trimmed with Russian sable, and the daintiest little hat trimmed with white pompon feathers.

"Is this seat engaged?" inquired the sweetest voice, I thought, that I had ever heard, and the face that smiled down at me was equally beautiful.

I hastened to assure her that she was very welcome to the seat with me, and made room for her cordially. How perfectly charming she was. I was fascinated by her in every way.

When I told her I was going to T—, she said, "I am so glad! Now I shall have company all the way. It is not pleasant to travel alone," she continued, "and one cannot always find a genial companion. I am fortunate this time." And again she gave me that delicious smile.

I shyly put my hand upon the rich folds of her dress, not thinking she would observe me.

"Do you like it?" she asked, with such gentleness that I recovered at once.

"I love it!" I exclaimed rapturously.

She opened her eyes, which were of the same hue as her dress, in some surprise, and replied a trifle wearily, "Do you like it so much? I detest it."

I looked my surprise but made no answer.

Perhaps she was wearied with it because she had so much of everything of the kind that it palled upon her, while I longed because of the deprivation of the same. Such indeed is life.

The cars stopped at a station further on. She arose hurriedly, saying, "This is where we change; come quickly, or we shall be carried by."

Supposing that she knew better than I about it, I followed her as she had commanded, although it did not seem to me to be at all like the place I was told to change at.

"How long shall we have to wait for the next train?" I asked of the station master, feeling ill at ease on account of my sudden exit from the train.

"Two hours, miss," he answered promptly.

"Why, I was told that I should only have to wait ten minutes," I said in alarm.

"You should have gone on to the next station. The regular change is made there," he answered coolly.

"I—I—thought this was the station you just referred to," faltered the lady in velvet.

"Oh, what shall I do!" I cried out in alarm. "What will they think when I do not get there on time, as I wrote I would?"

"I am so sorry," panted the lady in genuine distress, and turning to me with tears in her lovely eyes, added, "I will do the best I can to retrieve my mistake. We will go to the hotel and have our dinner, and you can telegraph your friends that you were detained, and tell them you will be there on the next train."

"Sorry, miss, but the high wind last night blew down our wires, and our line is not in use yet. But as soon as it is, you can send word at once."

"Please don't be angry with me," she begged, so humbly and sweetly that I tried to brighten up, although I was very much put out.

There was nothing to do but to go to the hotel and have some dinner and make the best of it. She had not meant to put me out so. It was all a mistake, of course.

After a very nice meal, which she insisted upon paying for, she said, "I am going to take a room, and get a little of the dust off from my dress. Will you come with me?"

I had nothing else to do, so agreed to accompany her after the landlord had assigned her the room.

Hastily she threw off her rich velvet dress, and stood, looking so girlish and pretty, in her delicate lace trimmed underclothing.

"Try it on," she said merrily, pointing to the elegant garment that lay in a heap on the floor. I blushed red as a rose.

The temptation was strong. We were about the same build and size.

Why not? I thought.

I would like, for once, to see how I would look and feel all dressed in my favorite velvet. I could not resist.

Off went my demure gray cashmere in a hurry.

"I will try on yours," she went on in high glee.

Soon we were laughing and giggling like two little school girls over our rapid transformation.

"Presto, change!" she cried, holding out her beautiful arms. "See what a nun your gray dress makes me look. And you, why, you look every inch a queen! Lovely! It's a pity that you can't wear it all the time," she cried, clapping her small hands. She paused thoughtfully for a second or two, and then said eagerly:

"I am going to go down and ask the landlord for my bill, just to see if he will notice the change. He won't know me, I'll warrant. Give me your hat and veil, and make the whole thing complete," she went on gayly. "I will be gone but a moment. Oh, what fun!" gleefully clapping her hands. Before I could remonstrate, she was gone.

I waited for her to come, with the story of her success or failure. What kept her so long?

I stood in my beautiful robes of velvet, looking indeed like some other very grand person who had stepped into poor Ethel Deering's shoes.

If Jack could see me now! I thought proudly.

Hark! I hear the tramp of men's feet instead of the light fairy-like ones of my lovely new found friend. The door flew open violently.

"Here she is!" called out a deep voice with evident satisfaction, and three officers of the law entered.

"What does this mean?" I asked with astonishment.

"Be quiet, miss, and you will not be harmed," answered one of them, soothingly.

"But where is the lady whose dress I have on and who has mine?" I stammered helplessly.

"She's all right," laughingly, "it's only you we want."

"What do you want of me?" I asked, beginning to be dreadfully frightened.

I heard him whisper to the landlord who had just come in: "She is crazy as a March hare. She escaped from the L— insane retreat early this morning, and we only got on her track through a telegram sent by your station master."

"He said the lines had blown down," I cried out, horrified at the man's falsehood to me.

"Ah, that was a neat little ruse, my dear. He had received our telegram, (as had all the stations along the line) to hold a lady with a velvet violet-colored dress, who was—" he touched his head significantly.

"But, my dear sir, I am not crazy," I cried in horror.

"Oh, no! that is what they all say," laughingly.

Great heaven! what a terrible situation I was in.

"Surely, sir," I said appealing to the keeper of the hotel, "you must know that I was not dressed in this velvet dress, when I came in here."

"Poor thing," he murmured, turning away from my pleading with a deep sigh; and turning to the officers, said, "There was another lady with her. But she paid the bill, and said the other lady was ill and that friends would soon be here to care for her."

"Poor girl!" commiseratingly said another man, aside. "She imagines that this other one changed dresses with her."

"Yes," returned the landlord. "The lady in gray said that the one in velvet was not quite herself. I thought she meant not feeling well. Strange she left her like this."

"Come, Miss Allstyne, put on your hat and wrap, and take a nice ride with us; that's a good girl," coaxingly said the one I took to be the leader, and whom I afterwards discovered was a detective.

And here was I, Ethel Deering, a poor innocent little typewriter girl, being taken for a maniac, and about to be shut up in a retreat for the insane, all through my obdurate love for velvet.

Ugh! I should hate it all the days of my life after this!

"Oh, sir, please telegraph to my friends and they will tell you I am as sane as you are," I cried, clasping my hands, while I trembled from head to foot.

"She may be," began the sympathizing host.

"They always talk like that," replied the man coolly. "They're never crazy, you know. Oh, no," laughing with pitying sarcasm.

"Won't you help me?" I groaned, turning to the landlord, encouraged by his pitying gaze.

"I am powerless," he answered turning away as if unable to bear the sight of my pleading face.

I believe I went temporarily insane in my fright and terror. For I began to tear off the hateful dress like a true maniac.

"Take it off! The hateful thing. I won't wear it!" I screamed. Off flew the hooks and eyes, buttons and pins in every direction.

I did not seem to remember that there were men in the room.

My head whirled around like a top, and then I fainted.

When I came to, I was lying on a bed in the same room, and a lady was bending over me.

"Where am I?" I asked faintly.

"You are all right, my dear," she answered soothingly.

"Those dreadful men!" I gasped.

"They're gone and you are safe," she replied, adding at my inquiring look, "The other lady sent back your dress, with an explanation that proved you to be the wrong person."

"Where is the velvet dress?" I asked with a shudder.

"They took it with them," she replied.

I arose with alacrity and began to put on my poor despised cashmere, that was by far dearer to me then than all the velvets in christendom.

"Why not rest awhile?" coaxed my hostess. "You need it after your dreadful experience, I am sure. Do you feel all right, now?"

"I feel better," I returned, "and now that I am safe. I feel as if I could not rest until I let my folks know what has become of me. They will be so alarmed. I hardly think they will ever trust me to leave home alone again in all my lifetime. And I don't know as I shall care to."

I telegraphed to my aunt Maria that I had been detained, and would let her know on what other date I should come to T—.

I took the next train home. My nerves were too shaken to go visiting just then. I must go home and see mother and Jack.

Imagine their surprise to see me come walking in that evening, just as it was growing dark.

Jack, dear fellow, had run over to comfort mother in my absence, and found her nearly beside herself with terror from the contents of a telegram that had preceded mine to T—, saying:

"Ethel not on half-past one train. What is the matter?" and signed with my aunt's name.

Jack was about to board the next train to search for me, when, luckily, I came.

I told my story in an excited way, and burst into a fit of weeping that threw me into a raging fever. I was ill all through my vacation.

One day I heard the doctor tell my mother and Jack, "I don't think it ever happened, at all. She had worked too hard, and was on the eve of a fever when she left home. She fell asleep and dreamed it, and it seemed so realistic to her, that she imagines it to be so. It is too absurd on the face of it, to be true," he added, while laughing good naturedly. "Nothing but the vagaries of fever, that's all. She has always been a little off on velvet, you say?" turning to mother.

"Ever since she was a babe," returned my parent, anxiously.

"That accounts for it. Plain as the nose on your face," retorted our medical advisor, with decision.

"Do you think I dreamed it, Jack?" I asked soberly, one day when convalescent. He tried to evade me by saying:

"There, dear, we won't talk about it. I only know this, you won't go off on any more trips alone."

"If it was all imagination, why be so afraid of my traveling alone?" I asked, maliciously.

"One can't tell what really might happen, you know," he answered gravely. "I shall have you safe in a few weeks," he added, with a tender smile. "And then you shall not only wear velvet dresses in your delirious dreams, but shall wear one at least in reality, let us be rich or poor."

"Jack, I shall never wear the dreadful stuff again," I said solemnly. "I hate it since—since that time!"

Now did I really dream it? I know I did not!

What a strange thing to happen outside of a two volume novel!

Oh! did I, or did I not dream it?

Every day I worried myself with this question, and suffered from the thought that Jack and my mother only humored me in pretending to believe in my adventure. But at last an explanation arrived and forever set me right in the eyes of those who loved me.

Our wedding day—Jack's and mine—dawned one bright and beautiful December day.

We were going to Washington, and perhaps further south, on our bridal tour.

Our presents were very nice and many of them valuable. Just before we were ready to leave the house, after having been solemnly made man and wife, there came another large package.

I was curious to know its contents, and waited for it to be opened. I was so glad that I did! It contained a whole piece of the most exquisite dark blue violet colored velvet I ever saw—*save one.* On it was laid an envelope. I hastily, and with trembling hands, opened it.

I took out a check for one thousand dollars! and a note, which ran thus:

"To the Lady in Gray:—The Lady in Velvet sends a greeting upon her wedding day, and not only wishes her much joy, but extends to her the most grateful thanks for *her* part enacted in the little drama of the day in which they exchanged dresses, for thereby the Lady in Gray saved the Lady in Velvet from a horrible fate. It was to force the Lady in Velvet to marry a man of her friends' choosing, that they had incarcerated her—a sane person—in an insane retreat. She escaped and by the help of the Lady in Gray, met her own chosen lover, and outwitted them all by securing a husband's care and protection.

"May I hope that the enclosed small gifts will, in a measure, palliate the deception used by the Lady in Velvet, and win pardon for the sorrow and trouble caused the Lady in Gray?

"And above all, she may be sure that she has the everlasting gratitude of my husband, and his wife. Signed, The Lady in Velvet."

SAVED BY THE BABY.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY L. S. FOWLER.

ON a lovely hillside, among the rocks and white birches, stood a good many years ago a little nest of a cottage that seemed really a part of its surroundings, for, being guiltless of paint, it formed no contrast to the moss-grown bowlders and the gray November sky. Trailing vines with their late fruit of scarlet berries ornamented the porch of the little cabin, from which could be seen a valley where a turf-grown road, like a green and white ribbon, shone uncertainly in the distance.

It was just this time in the year, three years before, that Jack Weldon had brought his young bride to this humble home, and, having been reared in these lonely wilds, she was almost as strong and courageous as Jack himself. Jack was a famous hunter and trapper and was away from home for days, leaving Grenell to the protection of a huge uncertain tempered canine suggestively named Nero, who was chained at the rear of the cabin. Intrepid Grenell took care of the house, milked the cow, gathered the winter store of nuts, kept her small home spotlessly neat, and even wove carpeting; a carpet loom having been a wedding present from her mother, who had, with the custom of those times, sold many a bright-hued roll at the town, exchanging the proceeds for groceries and dry goods. Grenell loved her loom, and spent many an hour in the little room in the loft which had been fitted up for its occupancy.

With the opening of Spring came the journey to town to dispose of the furs and skins. This was taken on horseback, and it was in the gray of early morning, one April that Grenell will never forget, that Jack disappeared down the winding path toward the highway, waving adieux to the pretty wife who watched him from the door. Even at this early hour there was a spectator. A dark-browed, sinister looking man, clad as a hunter, followed by a starved hound, crossed the clearing and disappeared in the woods beyond. Grenell watched him out of sight with a feeling of misgiving to which she was an utter stranger.

"Pshaw!" she said, giving herself a shake as she entered the house; "what am I afraid of, with such a dog as Nero, and a loaded revolver?"

As the day wore away with no incident, the evil-looking hunter passed out of her mind. A few days later he was brought back to her remembrance in a startling manner.

It was a warm day far in advance of the season. Little Benny, a sturdy baby of two years, played around the door, which was open. Grenell, seeing him contented, stole away to her loom and sang softly as she wove in the bright-hued rags. Suddedly the song ceased in the middle of a bar—a sound of stealthy footsteps, and simultaneously the door of the little room closed and the stout wooden staple shot into its hasp. This simple device had been adopted because it was easy of construction; and when at work Grenell always kept the door ajar, so that any means of opening from the inside had been considered unnecessary. Simultaneously with the locking of the door, Grenell threw herself like a tigress against it; then, realizing the futility of such efforts, she became suddenly calm. Varied sounds met her ears—evidently the intruders (how many were there, she wondered!) were looking for something, for they were moving the furniture about, opening and shutting drawers. The dishes jingled and crashed as desperate hands moved them, and mingled with this were the baby's gleeful shouts, showing that, as yet, he had met no stranger.

Grenell looked wildly around her narrow cage. One little window—only a few inches square—lighted it, and from it she could see Benny moving about in the sunshine, picking up things—treasures no doubt to his childish mind—and putting them carefully into his apron which he held by the corners. Nero suddenly became uneasy and tugged frantically at his chain, seeing which Benny let go all his treasures and started up the hill towards the kennel. The mother's heart sank within her at the sight of this new danger. Would he dare go near the growling dog? Yes, he kept on resolutely. She screamed to him from the window, but he only laughed, threw her a kiss, and went on faster than before. He held out his hands coaxingly. Nero growled ominously but paused and licked the little hands and face. Then Benny noticed something bright on the dog's collar and thought he would like it. He pulled and tugged with all his strength, and Nero, evidently thinking he was to be released, bent his head good-naturedly. To the agonized mother these minutes seemed as hours as she stood at those four small lights of glass, vainly wishing its dimensions capable of admitting her plump form. Suddenly a gleeful shout from Benny, and he sat down to investigate the bright collar, while Nero shot like a dark streak to the house. The next instant growls and curses, intermingled with a terrible struggle, seemed to shake the little cabin's foundations.

"Oh, if Jack would only come!" moaned the wretched prisoner. "What if he shouldn't come to-night?" and her next breath was a gasp. After what seemed hours to her over-strained nerves, there was a sudden silence. What had happened? Had Nero been killed, or had he routed the enemy, whom she felt sure was the *pseudo* hunter, and, yes, he must have come after the money Jack got for the furs. She strained her ears to catch a sound from below that should relieve her suspense, and they were greeted by the plaintive little cry: "Mamma, mamma, where is 'oo?"

"Mamma come by and bye," she called with affected cheerfulness, and Benny laughed and became silent. Then another call, "Benny 'ants his supper." "By and bye, when papa comes," she called back.

Gradually the shades fell around the little cabin. Baby was alone with the nameless horrors below—no mamma, no fire, no supper—while baby's protector was a prisoner to whom the day's events were mysteries unsolved. "Poor little Benny, he's gone to sleep without his supper, I guess," she said, with a sob in her throat.

It was quite dark when a cheery whistle announced the return of the hunter, and Grenell's overtaxed nerves gave way. "Jack! Jack!" she cried faintly, and became unconscious.

"Why, what are you all in the dark for?" was Jack's first salutation; then his foot caught on a soft substance, and Nero's answering bark astonished him beyond measure. Great was his horror when he succeeded in getting a light. His little Benny lay sleeping with his head pillowed on Nero's breast, while in the further corner lay the limp figure of a man. Blood drops spattered on the shining white floor and scraps of the man's clothing scattered here and there showed the desperate struggle that had occurred before Nero caught him by the throat and killed him. Everything was in the direst confusion—there was no fire, no wife! Where was Grenell? He called loudly—no answer rewarded him. He searched the little room—alas, that was easily done, and, because he must look somewhere, he sprang to the loft. The door was closed—of course she was not there, but—he held the light above his head as he peered inside. His heart gave a quick bound of terror, and he raised the woman's head tenderly.

"Ah," he breathed, "she has only fainted—better so, till I clear the house of its horrors."

When Grenell opened her eyes she was lying on her bed, Benny was sleeping beside her, Nero lay stretched on the best rug the house afforded, and Jack was getting supper.

The Fall of a Crow Cæsar.*

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY CHAS. E. BARNS.

YES," said the Major, brushing a speck from his immaculate uniform with the tips of his fingers, "you may talk about a military reverence for the uniform or clerical respect for the cloth; but we are not to be compared with the crow. His regard for the glossy dignity of his raven coat is amazing; and for autocratical deportment, when on duty, he can give us points."

We were seated under the deodars of the Major's own compound north of Candy, Ceylon, talking over the bare table after tiffin lighting our cigars and waiting for the coolie to bring the coffee.

"Yes, sir," he continued, "a crow is the only

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THE NUTSHELL STORY CLUB.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.)

black creature living that seems to have a sense of veneration for its own blackness, and looks down with contempt upon everything white. In the human family it is the opposite; every black pagan goes down the valley yonder and prays to be born white the next time he comes upon the earth; but a crow would not be white if he could. Look at that fine fellow on the peak of the palm-thatched bungalow yonder! Is he not magnificent? His feathers lie like facets of a black diamond in the sunlight, and he never tires of admiring himself. With what air of superiority he seems to say, 'You white trash, you need spangles and gilt to make you presentable, while I am a creature of a superior race. I can not only walk like you, but I can fly over your heads, and talk much faster and louder, and look as pretty when the ladies are around; but my nobility is by birth, while yours is merely by education and—clothes.'"

The Major began pouring the coffee with the finished care of a man who holds that a spot on his uniform would be a blot upon the whole English military; and then resumed. "You must know that we have had a great revolution here in the crow kingdom. There are about a thousand of them in the valley, and all sworn to that one yonder as never was a tribe sworn to its native chief. In this great conspiracy the Julius Cæsar of the crow world fell most ignominiously, and his fine black feathers were scattered to the four winds by the autocrat's own former allies. It was a great event and witnessed by every crow for miles; and so vehemently applauded by them that I was obliged to leave the compound and go down the valley to tiffin at the barracks."

"Well, Major, give me the history," said I. "You have aroused my curiosity."

"I meant to, and I mean to arouse it more," said the officer of the Tenth. "Remember first, however, that it is no easy honor to be crow king in this valley. The autocrat must not only be a terror to humans in general, but to crows in particular; and, not content with achieving his position, must maintain it with deeds of daring worthy of his pitch of place. He must lead all battles and must have the most commanding 'Caw!' so that his orders may be heard for miles. He must train his scouts, superintend all projects and take the initiative in matters of extreme peril. The former crow Cæsar could do all this with gallant grace, but one task set before him was too difficult, and the invincible fell.

"I had invited the General from Columbo up from the barracks to tiffin. The feast was one of my very choicest, and, as the General was always taciturn when there were a number of guests, and I wished to confer with him upon his plans, I took upon myself to entertain him alone. That I was particularly desirous of having everything just so was evidently discovered by the Cæsar of Crowdom who had, possibly, been informed by his scouts; for, during the feast, the big fellow came to the open windows, first at one end of the bungalow and then at the other, strutting up and down the sills with head cocked on one side and an air of importance that was ludicrous to behold. There was an ominous silence about the compound—a silence I knew to be the calm before the storm, the hush before battle; and so it proved. Course after course was served in precise style, and the conference was becoming animated when the pheasants were brought on—two fine young birds, luscious and brown, with sauce of the General's own liking. A fork was *missing*, and I despatched the boy for one. No sooner was he gone on the errand than at the further end of the room from where the big crow was strutting majestically, two of his allies set up a fierce warlike cry and flew at each other like game-cocks in a pit. The General paused, dropped his wine-glass, and his usually severe face relaxed. It struck us both as being very humorous; but no sooner were our heads turned in that direction than the honorable Cæsar crow quietly walked over, hopped up on the table, took one of the savory brown pheasants in each claw, and was half way back to his window before he was discovered. I made a dash for him, heading him off; but instead of letting go, he preferred to fight for the prize rather than to face his allies without the booty, suffering this humiliation. While I was struggling with him, the boy returned and closed the windows; whereupon the vicious fellow was subdued after some loss of blood on my part from his beak blows, and, tying him to the leg of a chair, I resumed tiffin in by no means a genial frame of mind.

"Never did a pair of browned pheasants look more appetizing than on my spotless damask, and never did a dish look more unpalatable on the floor than those same pheasants after the fracas. My cook managed to make a pardonable substitute, but I fell into a mood of revenge, knowing well that the story would get down to the barracks, and then up through all India by way of Madras, just as it did, in fact, but with the story of my revenge appended.

"'What are you going to do with the prisoner?' said the General with an amused expression upon his military countenance. 'Shall you kill him?'

"'No, General. I shall be more cruel. I shall humiliate him so deeply that his own co-conspirators will kill him.' Then to my coolie, 'Eisa, go out to the little shed, and fetch me that pail of whitewash!'

"'I do not see how that will serve you in a matter of revenge,' said the General.

"'Ah,' said I, 'do you not remember the Cingahalese proverb that 'whosoever finds a dead monkey, a paddy-bird's nest or a white crow shall be rewarded with immortality'? Well, General, I am going to immortalize the natives.'

"Half an hour later, in an obscure corner of the bungalow, the illustrious crow Cæsar was treated to several coats of calcimine, and left to dry. Then the General and I came out here under the deodars to smoke, just as we are now. The air was thick with crows, all chattering away to one another on branches and shed gable, discussing the momentous fate of their Cæsar: but in subdued tones, with furtive and knowing glances ever toward that closed window. The two fighters had long since made up, smoothing their feathers and offering each other congratulations that, while their leader was caught, they whom he had incited to mischief for the purpose of his easier plunder, were safe. A little later the boy raised the window and said that the crow was white as the cotton-blow. 'Let him go then,' said I.

"Then I saw a struggle going on within.

"'He won't go,' said the coolie.

"'Ah, is he not clever, the rascal? He knows that his appearance in that dress means his downfall. Boy, throw him out, I say!' And soon the most humiliated and dejected looking creature in all the world stood on the sill before his very army, and the refuge closed behind him. There was a hush. The gossips ceased their chatter, and the wise ones no longer glanced out of the corners of their eyes; his thousand allies simply stared at their dethroned Cæsar with almost human amazement, and then with very human scorn. The General renewed his laughter without restraint, the whole affair was so full of human comedy. Disgraced! It was like a coat of tar and feathers on a royal prince; he could never lift up his head again. In vain did he attempt to flutter off the shame; it would not flutter. He started meekly across the compound, but one of the more outraged of his followers—the Casca of the senate, let us say—came down from his high eminence on the gables and gave his Cæsar such a smart slap with his wing that the latter was a rolling cloud of white dust. Then the other conspirators followed quickly—Cinna, Trebonius, Cassius—one after another striking a blow that drove the noble tyrant into ignominious retreat; and lastly Brutus! till, with the shouts and confusion of the ten thousand, the king crow gave up the ghost, and was flayed of his feathers, each conspirator bearing away a trophy as if to proclaim abroad the white feather shown by their late ruler. It was a page out of the great book of Nature, and not a little of it human nature, too.

"So, I say," resumed the Major after the recital of this scene with all the enthusiasm of a witness of a human battle, "that fine fellow you see yonder is the present ruler of the valley crow kingdom; but there is no telling what is in store for him if he attempts to steal a browned pheasant from under the noses of my guest and myself by conspiring a cock-fight at the other end of the bungalow. So, too, I say further, that after crows, men are the greatest respecters of the cloth—but only after crows." And with this observation, the Major arose, brushed an imaginary speck from his decorations, by force of habit, and stalked down the valley-way.

*An amusing episode founded upon the facts of crow habits and peculiarities in the Island of Ceylon from the author's own note-books.

A PRAIRIE STORY.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY EMMA A. LENT.

YOU'RE not going to be afraid, are you, Bessie?"

"No, John, don't worry."

A bright, brave face Bessie uplifted for her husband's kiss, but if he had known with what sinking of heart she watched him ride away on his brief absence, he would hardly have gone so happily, or said: "What a brave little woman!"

But he lifted baby John to the horse's back for a moment, and then, with a kiss, set him down, and swinging lightly into the saddle, said:

"Now remember, Harry, that you're the man of the house."

"Yes, I'll watch things good, Uncle John; never you fear."

Ten year old Harry straightened himself up to the dignity of his position, and his uncle rode off across the prairie to the town ten miles distant.

The baby trundled his red cart up and down by the door, while his mother washed dishes, and Harry gave the chickens their breakfast.

Oh! the solitude of a prairie! There is nothing else just like it; the treeless, limitless stretch, roadless, and almost tenantless.

The people of this story were recent residents, and had come, like many restless New Englanders, to better their fortunes. Death had severed their home ties, and after that, one place seemed good as another.

Their nearest relative was this orphan nephew who was as their own, and though they were saved the homesickness caused by divided families, they could not at once get rid of the weird feeling of being shut out of the peopled world and its interests.

The nearest house was three miles away, and the inmates were Germans--good, quiet people, but all-sufficient to themselves. If it had not been for the supply of papers John Newton secured in town, they would have felt themselves aliens indeed.

But with health and youth, and courage for the future, and the baby's prattle to amuse them, time did not drag; only when the man was gone, then did the days seem long to the home-stayers.

But this day of the story, Bessie really tried to be as well as seem lighthearted, and sang as she tidied the little cabin, looking out occasionally at the baby, and at the sky to see if there were signs of rain.

Oh, how the parched earth needed it! The snow had lain so late, but under the strong, warm winds the ground speedily dried, and the long dead grass grew like tinder, and the new grass could hardly get a start. The sun grew hotter, and the west wind stronger, till the German said: "It vas vell to be keerful apout fire."

It grew hazy; the sunshine had a yellow glint, and the air a lifeless feeling which was very depressing, and far in the west the sky looked darker than elsewhere. Bessie tried to stifle a vague foreboding as she rocked the baby.

"Something's movin' on the prairie, Aunt Bess."

"Isn't it the cattle, Harry?"

"'Taint ourn; they're nearer by."

"Can't be John coming back!"

"He didn't go east; it looks like folks a-walkin'."

She laid the sleeping baby down, and looked out. The moving object was too distant to be clearly distinguished, but soon proved to be two men approaching at good rate.

"S'pose it's Injuns?"

"I guess not. I hope it isn't genuine tramps, either: too bad Rover died."

"Mr. Hummel says I can have the puppy soon. You aint afraid, Aunt Bess?"

"N-o-o, but they're evidently coming here. Dear me! how close the air is, and the sky looks so coppery. I wish John had stayed at home!"

At last the men were near enough for inspection. Unshaved, dusty, and coarsely clad they certainly were, with knapsacks on their backs and coats across their shoulders. They were well nigh breathless owing to their rapid pace and the heavy air, and Bessie hastily brought them water while they sat down on a bench under the little shed.

The oldest man had a gray beard, kindly eyes, and quite a pleasant voice as he thanked her; but Bessie had heard of desperate villains who could look meek and mild as lambs, and her heart quaked as he immediately said:

"Ain't there no men about this ranch, mem?"

There was no use in prevaricating, so the little woman said tremblingly:

"No, my husband is away just now."

"Hum-m! that's a pity; ain't it, Joe?"

Joe grunted an assent, and walked out a few paces and looked intently about.

"You aint got no fire-break," he said, coming back. "You ought to have."

"I guess not. I don't know."

"Your man took his team, of course."

"He rode one horse, and left one in the barn 'cause it's lame."

"Hm-m! it ain't dead lame, is it?"

"I don't know," faltered poor Bessie, feeling sure that she was confronted with horse thieves, while Harry's eyes flashed and his hands clinched.

"You needn't be afeard of us," said the elder man. "Me'n son Joe wouldn't hurt a hair of yer heads, but ye see—mebbe ye aint noticed—but there's danger abroad; the prairies is on fire to the west'ard, an' it aint no time fer polite parleyin' but fer workin': so if that horse of yourn is able to drag a plow, we'll git him right at it. The fire'll git here by noon—mebbe afore with this wind."

"What do you mean to do? I don't understand; we're new to the prairie."

"I jedged ye was, but I aint; the idee is to turn the grass under for a strip to wind'ard, an' when the fire finds plowed ground it dies out, or sweeps by one side an' t'other; see?"

"Yes, but is there time?"

"We'll do what we can, an' be a service to all on us same time."

The barn was opened, Ned was hurried into a harness, and the traces hooked to a plow in short order. Somehow all distrust of the strangers vanished before that lurid sky and the hot smoky wind. The cattle came up lowing and craving human companionship.

"Best let 'em into the shed, sonny; they might git skeered an' stampede. That air new garden will purtect the north side, so jest plow a half circle south'ard, Joe, to ring in all the buildin's: an' you keep up heart, little woman; we'll fix this right. After he gits a few furrers, we'll start a back fire if needful. Lord ha' massy on anybody ketched out in the open an' don't know enough to set a fire of their own. Guess I'll fetch some water fer Joe an' the critters; the air is like ashes."

Bessie hurried in, but the baby still slept, and still the smoke grew denser till the sun was obscured. Harry carried water to the uneasy cattle, and the plowed strip to windward grew wider, but with thankfulness for that, came anxiety for the dear man, who, if he had reached town, had ten miles of dangerous prairie to recross.

"Don't ye worry!" said the old man. "He went south'ard, an' the fire-storm mayn't head that way, an' it'll pass here 'fore he gits back; 'taint fur off; wind's hotter'n hotter. Better git some matches to set a counter fire on the out edge of that plowed ground; it'll creep towards the other, spite of the wind. Put the horse up, Joe; we'll trust to goodness now. You run in, little woman; it'll be purgatory here in no time!"

"But you must both come in, too!"

"Yes mem, shortly; you go."

She ran back, and catching up the wondering baby, sank down by the western window and watched with Harry the men set the counter fire, and then half choked with smoke and heat stagger towards the house.

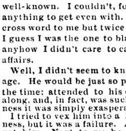
On, swift as fleet horses came the swirling cloud of smoke lit with leaping shafts of flame; on and on, still nearer, until meeting the barrier it paused, baffled for a moment, then swept to right, to left, on and on, with a sullen roar, leaving a blackened and smoking waste behind.

And then, when the storm of fire was past and they were safe, then Bessie cried. But not for long; anxiety for her husband, and housewifely care for her most welcome guests, soon roused her to action, and she hurried to prepare a dinner of the very best she had. And long before she dared to expect him, she saw her husband come riding safely and swiftly home.

But to tell of his hairbreadth escape from peril, his torturing fear for his loved ones, and his amazed joy and gratitude at finding them safe—all this would make another story.

How I Got Even With Jack.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY SARAH M. MAVERICK.



WHENEVER I went to the sewing society, or took tea away from home, there was always some woman bragging about how smart she was in getting even with her husband for something she didn't happen to like, and I began to think I was rather looked down upon because I couldn't make a complaint with the rest of them.

Now my Jack is famous as the best tempered man in town, and his devotion to his wife is well-known. I couldn't, for the life of me, find anything to get even with. He never spoke a cross word to me but twice in his life, and then I guess I was the one to blame in the matter; anyhow I didn't care to call attention to old affairs.

Well, I didn't seem to know just how to manage. He would be just so provokingly kind all the time; attended to his church duties right along, and, in fact, was such a model of goodness it was simply exasperating.

I tried to vex him into a little undue sharpness, but it was a failure. At last I thought I'd got him. Next to me he loves his pipe and tobacco, and always has them in a box on the kitchen shelf. He is very neat about them, and I've never thought of objecting till that morning. Then I informed him that I didn't want them there any longer.

He looked surprised, but answered pleasantly, "Very well, dear. They do make a dust, and I can keep them in the shed."

I felt so uncomfortable over it, that, when it rained that afternoon, I brought them back, and told him the tobacco would get so damp out there he couldn't use it.

It was of no use. I couldn't pose as a martyr any way I could fix it. Finally I told Jack I was going away for a day or two to visit Aunt Sophronia Lockroot, and bring her back with me.

He has a most inveterate dislike for the old lady, and would rather see the Ghost of Sitting Bull walk into our home than what he calls "our animated bank account," for, let me tell you, our eccentric aunt is worth in her own right about seventy thousand dollars, and I am the only relative to inherit.

I supposed he would object, but all he said was, "Very well, Mattie, do as you like, only I don't think I can stand it more than a week."

Aunt Sophronia likes to have people show her a great deal of attention, so, after I had coaxed long enough, she condescended to accompany me home.

As usual Jack behaved beautifully, and when, after he was comfortably seated in his dressing gown, with his cigar and evening paper, Aunt Sophronia began to sniff and cough, and wonder what made her "choke up so sudden like," he said he guessed it was his cigar, and took himself off to the kitchen.

Then she took a notion that music sounded sweetest at night, and would practice till midnight. Of course we couldn't sleep, but Jack didn't say much.

One evening, while she was playing, we heard a snapping sound, and, on investigating, found that three of the wires were broken. There was a queer look in Jack's face when I told him of it, but he only remarked that he supposed "the poor thing was tired out." All the time Aunt Sophronia stayed the piano tuner was just driven with business, and hadn't a moment he could spare, but the day after she left he managed to get an hour or two to himself, and repaired it for us.

Aunt Sophronia stayed three weeks instead of one, and I had entirely given up all idea of getting even with anyone. All my ambition centered in the one desire to get off in some corner by myself where I could die in a quiet, respectable manner.

One day, just after dinner, she informed me that she was going out, and would probably come back when she got ready.

I thought it very likely she would, and fervently hoped she would not hurry herself. For once in my life my wish was gratified. The sun went down, the twilight shadows fell, but the echo of Aunt Sophronia's number fives was wanting in the deserted hall. When Jack came in to supper he had a letter in his hand.

"Here, Mattie," he called, "see if you can make sense out of this? I can't."

It was a letter from Aunt Sophronia and it read thus: "You have a trick, Mattie, of talking in your sleep, and when you first came to my house you told all about your little plan, and I was delighted, of course, to find that I was the instrument chosen by which you was to get even with Jack. Heaven only knows what for. I've been here long enough to see that he and Job are blood relations. Jack has five thousand dollars in the bank, and to-day I have deposited the same amount in your name, so now you can say you have got even with him, and this is the only way you ever will be—with your disposition. With this I send the bank book which will probably be more welcome than I would. I am about to take the train for home, and you can send my valise by express.

"You might as well know first as last that this five thousand is all you will ever get of my money, as I am afraid to trust so large a fortune in the hands of a woman who hasn't sense enough to know when she has a good husband.

"The other sixty-five thousand will go to found a home for men whose wives make life a burden to them, and it will always be full. I am glad that I could be of assistance to you in this little matter, and it strikes me that so far as I am concerned I've evened up things pretty well. Your loving aunt.

Sophronia Lockroot."

"I should—should say so," I exclaimed, as I contemplated those vanishing thousands, and beheld all my castles in the air fall around me in a heap.

"What on earth does she mean?" said Jack, as I looked up, hardly knowing whether to laugh or cry, and then I told him all about it, expecting sympathy, but all he did was to lie back in his chair and laugh and laugh, till I was too provoked for anything.

Somehow I don't feel exactly certain about who got the best of it, and I don't very often speak about it, especially before Jack, for fear it might hurt his feelings, you know, though I don't exactly see how it could either, but he always acts as though he was going into hysterics if I so much as mention it.

One thing is certain, Aunt Sophronia won't visit us this year.

CONDUCTED BY FLORENCE H. WYNNE.

SANITARY aspects of bread-making are entirely the product of the present generation. In our grandmother's day nobody thought of such a thing. If bread was light and reasonably sweet, and above all if there was enough to go around, nothing further was considered necessary.

In these modern days, however, when science rises paramount to everything else, the sanitary aspects of bread-making have been considered worth the while of the most distinguished chemists and the busiest of scientific professors.

So important is the influence of bread upon health and happiness, that in leading institutions of learning the art of bread making has been added to the regular course of study. In Lasell Seminary, Auburndale, Mass., for instance, a gold medal in the form of a miniature loaf of bread, is annually given to the girl who excels in this branch of domestic science.

Dr. Edson, the commissioner of health for New York City, has recently published an exhaustive article in which he shows that the action of yeast upon dough is merely a germ growth—just the same as a case of small-pox is the action of a small-pox germ in the human body. Warmth, moisture and organic growth are necessary for both; and he claims that the gluten contained in flour affords a beautiful stamping ground for the germs of disease at the same time that it gives the yeast germ a chance to flourish like a green bay tree. And he says there is not the slightest doubt that the germs of many diseases have been carried about by bread.

Especially is this true with baker's bread. As every housewife knows, yeast-raised bread must be kneaded a long time. Now suppose a baker's apprentice is suffering from any disease,—skin disease more especially. Germs of his complaint are sure to find lodgment in the dough, and be sold to consumers with the bread. And the ordinary doctor will never suspect where his next patient got his new disease.

Or, as disease-germs lurk in the air and the dust, the dough may collect them even by standing exposed to rise, and then being re-kneaded as is done in many houses.

Science, again, has proved that there are more than one hundred different yeast plants or fungi, that some of them are very poisonous and that they are often formed in under-done bread—which explains why it is that half-baked bread is so injurious to many people.

It has been demonstrated by the Government chemists, as well as by practical experience in baking, that pure carbonic acid gas (which is the leavening power produced in the loaf when yeast is used) is produced in the dough, and light, spongy, sweet and wholesome bread is made more readily by the use of a good powder than with yeast or with any other leavening agent. The action of the baking powder is mechanical entirely, and causes no chemical change in the flour. The water used in mixing the loaf causes the cream of tartar and soda of the baking powder to unite, their dissolution at once begins, the product being pure carbonic acid gas. Thus the leavening gas is obtained by the decomposition or destruction of the leavening agent itself, instead of from the putrefaction of valuable parts of the flour.

Yeast, as is well-known, does not of itself raise the bread any more than the match which is applied to the fuel gives the heat by which the loaf is baked. As the heat from the fire is the product of the destruction of the fuel, so the carbonic gas which raises the loaf of bread made with yeast is the product of the destruction of the flour from which the loaf is made. The yeast simply incites the elements of the flour to an action that is destructive and unnatural. The purest baking powder, being diffused throughout the mass, so that a suitable portion of it will act upon every particle of the flour, as the water reaches it produces the little volumes of air which, being entangled and held from escape by the paste, form the tiny cells which distend the dough, and this takes place so nearly at the same time in every part of the mass that the whole is raised and made as light as a sponge. And according to the United States Government chemists baking powder bread is by far the most healthful.

Experience as well as chemical analysis has proved to me that the best baking powder is the "Royal." It contains nothing but the purest cream of tartar and soda, which, being combined in exactly the right proportions produces carbonic acid gas, without any of those uncertain and unwholesome things known as "yeast-germs." And it is also the only baking powder that will successfully raise large bread.

Do not confine yourselves entirely to wheat flour when making bread. Try graham and corn and rye and shorts; and don't bake them all the same day, but vary the programme by having one kind one meal and another the next—since variety is the spice of life.

The proprietors of the baking powder referred to have issued a very complete and reliable cook-book known as the "Royal Baker"—from which I select the following well-tested recipes which you will all do well to try. [As baking powders differ greatly in strength and purity it is highly important to remember that the quantities specified in these recipes hold good only in case the Royal is used.]

Take for instance this graham bread for breakfast: One and one-half pints graham flour, one-half pint flour, one tablespoonful sugar, one teaspoonful salt, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, one and one-fourth pints milk, or equal parts milk and water. Sift together graham flour, wheat flour, sugar, salt and powder; add the milk or milk and water; mix rapidly into soft dough, which pour from bowl into greased tin. Bake in rather hot oven 40 minutes. Protect loaf with paper first 15 minutes.

Then try for dinner this Boston Brown Bread. Flour one-half pint, one pint corn meal, one-half pint rye flour, 2 potatoes, one teaspoonful salt, one tablespoonful brown sugar, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, one-half pint water. Sift flour, corn meal, rye flour, sugar, salt and powder together thoroughly; peel, wash and boil well 2 mealy potatoes, rub them through sieve, diluting with water. When this is quite cold, use it to mix flour, etc., into batter like cake; pour into well greased mold having a cover. Place it in saucepan half full of boiling water, where the loaf will simmer one hour, without water getting into it. Remove it then, take off cover, finish by baking in fairly hot oven 30 minutes.

And finish up with this for supper: One quart flour, one teaspoonful salt, one-half teaspoonful sugar, two heaping teaspoonfuls baking powder, half medium-sized cold boiled potato, and water. Sift together thoroughly salt, flour, sugar, and baking powder; rub in the potato; add sufficient water to mix smoothly and raqidly into a stiff batter, about as soft as for pound cake; about a pint of water to a quart of flour will be required—more or less according to the brand and quantity of the flour used. Do not make a stiff dough, as in yeast bread. Pour the batter into a greased pan, four and one-half by eight inches, and four inches deep, filling about half full. The loaf will rise to fill the pan when baked. Bake in very hot oven 45 minutes, placing paper over first 15 minutes, to prevent crusting too soon on top. Bake immediately after mixing.

Or if you have an invalid in the family try this Norwegian bread for dyspeptics. One pint barley meal, one-half pint graham flour, one-half pint flour, one teaspoonful salt, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, one pint milk. Sift together barley meal, graham flour, flour, salt and powder; mix into firm batter with the milk; pour into greased tin, bake in moderate oven 40 minutes. Cover with paper 25 minutes.

Here, too, is an excellent oatmeal bread. One-half pint oatmeal, one and one-half of flour, one-half teaspoonful salt, three of baking powder, three-fourths pint milk. Boil oatmeal in one and one-half pints salted water one hour; add milk; set aside until cold. Then place in bowl, sift together flour, salt, and powder and add. Mix smoothly and deftly. Bake in greased tin 45 minutes, protected with paper 20 minutes.

And if you want the best of corn muffins for breakfast next morning, try these:

Royal Corn Muffins: One pint corn meal, one pint flour, one tablespoonful sugar, one teaspoonful salt, three teaspoonfuls baking powder, one tablespoonful lard, two eggs, one pint milk. Sift together corn meal, flour, sugar, salt and powder; rub in lard cold, and eggs beaten, and milk; mix into batter of consistence of cup cake; muffin pans to be cold and well greased, then fill two-thirds full. Bake in hot oven 15 minutes.

Now, after all this talk about yeast I am going to give a few recipes for yeast-bread, just because several subscribers have asked for them; and will begin with the best rule for

POTATO YEAST.

One cup grated raw potato, one-half cup salt, one-half cup sugar. Pour over it (and stir thoroughly) two quarts boiling pater. When lukewarm stir in one cup yeast and keep in a warm place till light. Care must be taken that it does not get hot enough to scald the mixture after the cup of yeast is added. When sufficiently risen, keep in a jug in a cool cellar.

PARKER HOUSE ROLLS.

One pint sweet milk, scald, let it get nearly cool; add one-half cup yeast, two tablespoons sugar, a bit of salt, (unless the yeast is salt enough) two tablespoons lard—or butter—mix together a stiff batter with milk. Let it rise over night. Knead in the morning, put back in dish and let it rise till about 3 P. M. Knead and roll out about an inch thick. Warm a little butter and spread over it, cut with a large cutter and fold together. Lay an inch apart in the tin, let rise till light (about 5 P.M.), then bake in a quick oven. These rolls can be made in any other form preferred.

RUSKS.

One cup yeast, one pint milk, one cup sugar, one-half cup butter, two eggs. Make a sponge over night, mold and rise a second time till very light; mold again and cut like rolls. Do not mold in too much flour as the eggs tend to make them dry.

MILK YEAST BREAD.

One coffee cup full of equal parts milk and water, and a small teaspoon salt; make a thin batter with flour (not as thick as griddle cakes); set in a vessel of warm water and keep warm, stirring frequently till small bubbles appear; then do not disturb. When the yeast is light, warm one quart milk, add the yeast, mold and put in tins.

WHITE BREAD.

One cup milk, one and one-fourths cups water, one teaspoonful salt, piece of butter size of a walnut, one yeast cake, about three pints flour. Knead thoroughly and let rise three hours; then knead again a little, divide the dough into two loaves and put in pans to rise one hour longer. Bake in a moderate oven one hour.

GRAHAM BREAD.

One cup milk, one and one-fourth or one and one-half cups water, one teaspoonful salt, piece butter size of a walnut, one yeast cake. One or two tablespoonfuls molasses, about one quart granulated wheat flour and one pint white flour. Knead and let rise in the same way as white bread, baking ten or fifteen minutes longer.

BREAD AND BEAUTY.—A PRIZE WINNER.

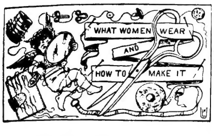
Do you know that an excellent way and an inexpensive one as well, of putting up rhubarb for winter use, is as follows? Peel and cut up the rhubarb, just as though preparing it for sauce. Then fill ordinary glass jars nearly full with pieces of rhubarb and pour in cold water enough to come to the top of the jar. Seal up tight and set away down cellar, and you will find next winter that you have rhubarb as nice and fresh for sauce or for pies, as though it had just come from the garden. No sugar is needed, and the rhubarb next winter will taste ten times as good as it does this summer.

To make a rhubarb custard, a correspondent sends us the following rule: Drain, but not press, the juice from boiled rhubarb; add to one cupful of juice a cup of sugar and one tablespoonful of butter. Put them on to boil and then add a thickening made of two well beaten eggs and one tablespoonful of corn starch mixed in a little water, and flavored with a teaspoonful of lemon extract. This can be eaten as custard, or used as the inside of pies. A good rule for an open pie is to use two tablespoonfuls of corn starch in the thickening and the yolks of four eggs, and then use the whites for a frosting, thoroughly beaten with one tablespoonful of sugar and browned in the oven.

Reference was made in our Kitchen Chats recently, to Cream of Celery Soup. Not all housekeepers know that the root of celery is equally good with the tops for soup, and costs much less. The roots are washed and scraped and then boiled until tender, mashed through a colander, put with a quart of milk, seasoned and thickened.

In baking bread have the oven heated to about four hundred degrees, reducing it gradually as the large loaves are baking. A two-pound loaf will bake in sixty minutes, a one-pound loaf in thirty minutes; rolls from fifteen to twenty minutes.

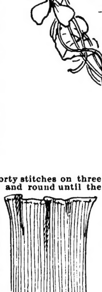
The time necessary for cooking green corn and spinach is ten minutes; new potatoes, peas, asparagus, rice, summer squash and celery, twenty-five minutes; young beets, parsnips, turnips, onions, carrots, cabbage, sweet potatoes, white winter squash, salsify and cauliflower, forty-five minutes; shell beans, string beans, winter carrots, red onions, old turnips and parsnips, one to two hours.



THIS is an off month for grown people's fashions, and as many young mothers want to know what the tiny bits of babies are wearing, we will indulge in a short talk about baby-things.

The old fashion of dressing babies, of doing them up in tight bands the minute they are born, and keeping them swathed and bandaged, with their little legs done up so tightly in blankets and cloths that they cannot move, has gone by. Nowadays it is the aim of every wise mother, to dress her baby as comfortably and lightly and loosely as possible, consistent with warmth. A great many mothers have made mistakes in the past by dressing the baby altogether too warm; and as a result, the tiny bit of humanity has protested by crying and has got called "a cross baby" in consequence. By all means dress the baby in warm flannel and do not let him get chilled; but do not keep him so bundled up in several thicknesses of woolen as to make him suffer with the heat, especially in warm weather. The healthiest babies are those which are kept comfortably cool.

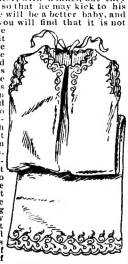
Let us begin with the new-born baby. The old-fashioned band, which was the first thing, and is now, to put on to the new-born bit of humanity, is not made of cloth or linen as it used to be; in fact, doctors nowadays have prescribed a straight piece of fine flannel, three-quarters of a yard long and left unhemmed at the edges, as they say that even the fold which is made by the hem presses against the tender flesh of the baby and hurts him. This strip of flannel should be loosely overcast with fine silk, and the ends turned over once and cross-stitched down. This band should be put on very smoothly but not too tightly, and should only be worn until the child is from seven weeks to three months old, as seems necessary. Some mothers use over this the knit band, but usually the knit band is not put on until this straight one is laid aside. The knit band, of which we give a picture, may be made at home if one does not care to, or cannot purchase them. They are made of fine Saxony and knit in a straight piece, on the largest sized steel needles. Cast on forty stitches on three needles, and knit round and round until the band is seven inches long, seaming two and two; then bind off, all except a dozen stitches in front and behind, and knit those back and forth two inches longer, to form a strip to fasten the napkins to.



THE KNIT BAND.

The old-fashioned linen shirt, trimmed with lace and hand-made, which we used to think was so dainty, is now entirely gone by, and knit ones of silk or wool are used to take their place. In fact, linen is no longer used about babies' clothes, as it is too cold and slippery; fine lonsdale or cambric being preferred instead. The little shirts can be bought for anywhere from twenty-five cents to a dollar apiece, or they may be made at home. To knit them, use Saxony yarn, or if preferred the finest quality of knitting silk; only two needles will be required for the body, and those should be the coarsest steel ones. Cast on one hundred stitches on one needle, and knit back and forth garter-fashion for two inches; then change the needles to medium-sized ones; knit back and forth for three inches longer, and then change again to the large needles, knitting a distance of two inches more, when the body of the shirt will be half done. Then knit twenty stitches, bind off sixty stitches, and knit the remaining twenty stitches; turn and knit twenty stitches, then cast on twenty stitches, then knit the remaining twenty stitches. Now go on as before; knit two inches on the coarse needles, then change to the medium-sized, knit three inches, then change back to the coarse needles and make two inches longer. Now bind the whole off and double together and crochet the sides together from the bottom up, leaving the upper two-inch length for the arm-holes; then take the four coarse needles and pick up the stitches around the arm-holes, being careful to miss none. Knit round and round like a stocking four inches, then change to small needles and knit an inch and a half more and bind off. When both sleeves are finished, crochet a little edge around the sleeves and neck and run a little ribbon or silk tape around the neck, to tie it with.

There has been a reaction in the last few years against the pinning blanket. Doctors have decided and wise mothers agree that the baby's legs should be left free to kick and squirm all he chooses. Remember your baby is nothing but a young animal, for all that he seems to be nothing short of an angel, and he must learn to use his limbs in just the way that other young animals do. His legs should be kept covered, of course, with flannel, but they should be left loose so that he may kick to his heart's content. He will be a better baby, and a happier one, and you will find that it is not half the work to take care of him, that it used to be to take care of those bundled-up and strapped-up babies of long ago. The pinning blanket was formerly used to pin up tightly around the child's legs, to keep him from coming in contact with his petticoats. But it was discarded on the score of health. The petticoats, however, are apt to get so soiled, and it is so much work to change and wash them, that lately people are using the pinning blanket again; only they are leaving it very loose indeed around the child's limbs. It is made of a single width of flannel, about three-quarters of a yard long, with the edges cross-stitched or feather-stitched down with silk: the upper part is fastened to a band. The old-fashioned way was to make this a straight band of cloth; the new-fashioned way is to have this band fitted over the shoulders with an armhole cut out. This is not as convenient, however, because in case it gets wet or soiled, it cannot be removed without taking off the child's outer clothing. The straight bands are usually preferred; but they should always be pinned very loosely, as should all his bands.



THE GABRIELLE SKIRT.

COME TO STAY.

With regard to the petticoat, most mothers nowadays use but one, and that a flannel one; a new style, which is being very generally used, is the Gabrielle skirt revived. It is made of a straight piece of flannel, cut down to fit the shoulders, with arms-eyes, and gored at the bottom; some are left plain in front, and some are laid over in plaits, like the one in the illustration. The edges of the neck and arms-eyes are finished with a little scallop and row of embroidery or feather-stitching. The bottom can be finished in the same way. This brings all the weight from the shoulder, and many mothers are liking them very much. Others are objecting to them on the same account that they do the fitted bands to the pinning blanket; because they cannot change them without removing the dress, in case of any accident to them; and accidents are liable to happen in the best of families, where there are babies.

The little dresses are made much as they have been for some years past. Some have a little ruffle over the shoulder, in imitation of the larger childrens', but the effect is apt to be fussy and is not advisable.

How many clothes shall I need at first for baby? is a question which often puzzles young mothers.

It is necessary to have at least three of a kind for the poorest mother, and it is better to have half a dozen shirts, bands, and pinning blankets, with two dozen diapers; because no mother can wash for the baby every day, and by all means a baby should be kept clean and sweet. An ill-smelling baby is by no means a well-spring of joy. Of petticoats there should be at least three, and six slips. It would seem that no mother could very well get along with fewer.

A little wrapper to put over the baby's night gown when it first wakes in the morning and to keep on him until after breakfast, or until he takes his bath and is dressed, is a necessity. They should be made like a long sack opening in front with sleeves of course. They can be made of flannel, and are extremely pretty of fine white cashmere trimmed with hand-embroidery. A very serviceable wrapper for cold weather is made of eider-down flannel in pink or blue, with a crocheted edge around the neck and sleeves of silk to match, and tied with ribbon. I once saw a very pretty one made of cheese-cloth, lined with a very thin layer of cotton wadding, and tied with white cotton, exactly as you would tie a puff: it was edged with a feather-stitching of white cotton or linen floss, and for a cheap wrapper was both warm and pretty.

It is always best to use the flannel night gown, as the child will often throw off the bedclothes, and the flannel will afford him a protection which he cannot throw off, and will keep him from taking cold.

A SENSIBLE DRESS.

It is wise to put the child into short clothes as early as possible; in fact do not make its earliest clothes too long, as those very long robes which were thought to be so beautiful long ago have gone by; they only add to the weight of the child and are of no earthly use. Its clothes may be shortened by the time the child is six or seven months old, usually, with benefit to itself and mother.

Whatever you do, never be guilty of putting stockings and shoes on little bits of babies. With long skirts of flannel, and especially with pinning blankets, they are never needed, and are only uncomfortable and disagreeable for the child. Do not undertake to put anything on his feet until his clothes are shortened so that he needs something as a protection. Then use soft woolen stockings and chamois skin shoes, or else the little knit socks. It is neither good taste nor good style to put kid shoes with regular soles onto a baby bfeore it can walk. The chamois skin shoes are extremely pretty, come in several styles, keep the child's feet warm, and do not in any way cramp the child's foot or feel hard and uncomfortable to it. A kid shoe with a sole does not become necessary, and is not considered good form, until the child begins to walk, when of course he will have to have soles. No child, however, should be allowed to wear heels to his shoes, until he is at least seven or eight years old, as the spring-heels give the foot a much better chance to grow in its natural shape, and are in every respect more comfortable and sensible.

A word about baths. Of course the baby should have its bath every morning, in tepid water, and in a warm place; pure white Castile soap should always be used. Do not be misled by any glaring advertisement of any other kind of soap than white Castile for the baby; that is the purest, softest and best for its little tender skin As the child gets older, do not think that its daily bath becomes any the less necessary. It will learn to depend on its bath every day, and it should be taught to think that a bath for the entire body is just as necessary as it is to wash its hands and face in the morning; a child that is brought up so, will turn out to be neat and clean, both in body and soul. Because a child happens to be three years old instead of one, when he will get into ten times as much mischief and dirt, should he be left a week at a time without a bath? It will be some trouble to follow up the daily bath for a while, but it will pay in the long run to do it until the child gets big enough to do it for himself, and he will bless you for it as long as he lives.

Now another word, about rocking the baby. The old-fashioned rocking cradle of our youth, has been relegated to the attic in more senses than one. Mothers nowadays do not rock their babies. Physicians long ago decided that rocking the baby, whether in a cradle or in its mother's or grandmother's lap in a rough, uneven chair, jars the child's brain and has, in many cases, produced rickets and been the cause of other brain troubles. It is not necessary to rock the child at all, if you do not educate him to think he must be; he will be just as well off lying in his crib, and he should always be handled very carefully. The fashion of trotting him on the knee, or of jouncing him up and down in the arms, is bad for him also, and modern mothers will not allow it; neither will she allow him to get the idea, as babies often do very young, that if he cries at night somebody is going to get up and light the pretty light for him to look at. Many a night's rest has been missed by both father and mother, simply because the baby has been indulged in this notion. If he is not allowed a light in the room at night, he will not know anything about it and will not cry for it. It is very remarkable how much can be taught a very young child, if only the right way is taken at the beginning.

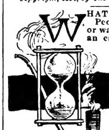
In place of a rocker of any kind, some mothers use a hammock, which can be swung in the corner of the room, which is warmest and the most out of the way. A netting hammock, like the Comfort hammock, for instance, is the best for the purpose, as a nice little warm bed can be made in it, with blankets and pillows, and after the baby is in it can be tied together so that he will not fall out.

Now I hope I have given you some new ideas and some information that will be valuable; and when the baby comes, "may he live long and prosper."

A pair of gloves passes through nearly two hundred hands, from the time the skin is dressed until the gloves reach the purchaser.

Queer Ways of Keeping Time.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY RENE BACHE.



WHAT o'clock is it? People who have no clocks or watches find that not such an easy question to answer. The primitive devices adopted for telling time in various parts of the world are very interesting.

Islanders of the south Pacific skewer together on the mid-rib of a palm leaf a number of the oily nuts of the candle-nut tree. They light the uppermost one of the kernels, which are of nearly uniform size and burn with a clear bluish flame, lasting for about 10 minutes each. Thus a candle of six nuts will measure by its burning a length of time equal to one of our hours.

The hill people of Assam reckon time and distance by the number of quids of betel-nut chewed on a journey. It will be remembered how, according to Washington Irving, Gov. Wouter Van Twiller dismissed the Dutch colonial assembly invariably at the last puff of his third pipe of tobacco. A Montagnais Indian of Canada will set up a tall stick in the snow, when traveling ahead of friends who are to follow. He marks with his foot the line of shadow cast, and by the change in the angle of the shadow the on-coming party ascertains on arriving at the spot just how far ahead of them the leader is.

In the reign of King Alfred, time was commonly measured by the wasting of candles, which were shielded by screens of horn. They were marked off in sections of an hour. Such candles may still be purchased in England. They are to this day employed in some Roman Catholic Churches. Courting by length of candle is a familiar old practice. Candles were known to the ancient Romans, and presumably to the Egyptians and Babylonians, and they may have been utilized in similar fashion by them.

Time is kept with tolerable accuracy in Chinese shops and temples by burning incense sticks of sawdust carefully mixed with a small proportion of glue and evenly rolled into cylinders 2 feet long. These sticks are divided into lengths for the hours, and when lighted they are consumed very slowly without flame. One of them lasts half a day.

Hour-glasses were a decided improvement on candles for timekeeping, but they are now so far obsolete as to be found only in some churches, where they are used to regulate the length of prayers. Most of them are remarkably inaccurate. Four such prayer-glasses were carefully tested recently by the writer. One, supposed to mark an even hour, required 67 minutes to run out. Another, for three-quarters of an hour, registered only 42 minutes. The third, for half an hour, lasted 28 1-2 minutes. No. 4, for a quarter-hour, was nearly 2 minutes over time.

Chinese physicians have for a time-check a joss-stick broken so as to have several angles. Fire is set to one end, and the patient is told to take the first dose when the burning reaches the first angle, another when it gets to the second angle and so on. Chinese messengers, having but short periods to sleep, wake themselves by placing a lighted bit of joss-stick between their toes. This acts as an alarm at the proper moment.

The most primitive water-clock is commonly found on board of a Malay proa, usually piratical. It is a cocoanut-shell that floats in the bottom of the boat, with a small perforation through which the water slowly makes its way. The shell fills and sinks at the end of one hour. Water clocks are supposed to have been invented in Babylon, where they were certainly used, some of them being very elaborate. They were introduced thence to Jerusalem, by King Ahaz. The water-clocks and sun-dials of those days were astrological mysteries kept secret by the priests, who were professors of science as well as of religion.

The notion of dividing the days and nights into twelfths was brought from Egypt to Rome. The nights and days varying in length with the seasons, no mechanical timekeeper could be devised to register them. This difficulty actually postponed the final evolution of the modern clock for many centuries. It was Hipparchus who first suggested that 24 even hours should be considered to make a day, but ages were destined to elapse before Ansonia was to produce its complete 99-cent result.

To ascertain the time at night, the Apache Indian employs a gourd on which the stars of the heavens are marked. As the constellations rise in the sky, he refers to his primitive orrery and finds out the hour. By turning the gourd around he can tell the order in which the constellations may be expected to appear. In closing, it should be remarked that the first timekeeper was the stomach, which notified its owner when the hour for a meal arrived.

A man who has made a scientific study of the peculiarities of hens, says they can distinguish between white and colored people, and seem to consider the latter their especial enemies. He insists that he has never found two roosters who crowed alike, having noticed the crows of over one hundred roosters. They crow a few minutes after being frightened, and after eating, and are most lively at dawn.

SOMETHING that will please the younger members of the household is most welcome to a busy mother, and here is a novelty easily made, fairly durable, and which with most children will not become a "cast-off" for a long time. This is a tumbling doll, and to make one, procure a round pasteboard box, three and one-half inches long and two inches in diameter. These may be readily obtained at a drug store. Remove the top and bottom. From white kid cut a strip nine inches long and two inches wide, fasten this tightly around the upper part of the box and on it draw, with a pen, eyes, ears, nose and mouth. Cut a round of felt four and three-fourths inches in diameter, of any color in which you wish to dress your doll. Gather the outside edge of this felt, and fasten it to the lower edge of the box so that the felt will really form a little bag below the box. Cut another circle from the felt four inches in diameter. Pink the edge of this finely and gather just above the pinking. Drop a very large glass marble into the open part of the box and let it roll down into the bag below it. Cover the open part of the box with the round of felt to make a cap. In putting on the cap be careful to neatly cover the top of the white kid used to represent the face. From bronze kid cut a strip five inches long and two and one-half inches wide. Cut off the lower corners a little, and also cut out of the centre of the lower part a V-shaped piece. Use this for a vest. Fasten the vest securely in the back, and let it cover the bottom of the white kid and the top of the yellow felt. For the legs cut two pieces from the felt, each one and one-half inches long and two and one-fourth inches wide at the top, tapering to one and one-fourth inches in width at the bottom; double this piece together lengthwise through the centre and slant the bottom a little so that when folded the fold will be one-fourth of an inch shorter than the outside edge. Overhand the three sides together with silk of the same shade. From the bronze kid cut a boot-shaped piece one and one-half inches in length. Cut this double and overhand the seams together; then fasten them to the bottom of the legs. Next sew the legs to the bottom of the bag, being careful to turn the toes out. Cut the coat from felt; it should be cut six and one-fourth inches wide and four and three-fourth inches long. Round the upper edge, and cut a piece about one and one-half to two inches from each of the lower corners. Cut out a very narrow piece from the centre of the part remaining from the bottom to the edge from which the piece was cut out. This will form the tails of the coat. Cut the sleeve one and three-fourth inches in length and two and one-eighth inches wide at the top, sloping to one and three-eighths inches at the bottom. Double this together and overhand the edges of the top and side. From white kid cut a hand three-fourths of an inch in length, and cut out the fingers and thumb. Sew these hands inside the sleeves and fasten the sleeves to the coat at the place in which they would naturally belong. Work French knots down the front of the coat to resemble buttons, and also on the back of the coat where buttons are usually placed. Fasten the coat around the body of the doll so as to cover the upper edge of the bronze kid, and roll the top over to form a collar. Make a pompon of black silk to fasten on the top of the cap and the doll is complete. Place a board so it will have a good slant and put "Mr. McGinnis" at the top with the left hand and with the right give his cap a pull forward and you will find what a "tumbling doll" means. He will cause no end of merriment among the children, and is sure to interest older people as well.

Many people like to obtain a souvenir from every new place they visit; these are generally treasured carefully for a while, then packed away because "I hate to throw them away you know." A very nice way to preserve them as long as one usually regards them as treasures, is to make them useful, instead of putting them in a cabinet. A handsome stone from the beach may be painted and used as a paper weight, or if one be not an amateur artist the name of the place may be written across the centre with gold paint, or dashes of gold put around the edges. A large, round or flat beach stone may be made a very useful souvenir by heating it to carry in the hands when riding on a cold day; one would be sure to enjoy the stone almost as much as the memory of the outing.

A large clam shell may be painted with a tiny marine view and used for a pin tray. A tuft of dried sea weed, if freed from all animal matter, will make a bit of effective drapery for a mirror. Milkweed sachets, birch-bark match safes, broom holders, painted lichens, etc., will come under this same class of pleasing souvenirs which may be cast away without regret when their day of usefulness is over. A description of one more useful article, and I am done. This is a fanciful arrangement for holding up the dress under a wrap or gossamer, or if one attend a lawn party in the country and the grass is very damp. Use No. 12 satin ribbon, any color desired. Make a belt of it, fastened with a handsome bow; attach pieces of ribbon of the same kind, each eighteen inches long, to the front, back and each side. To the bottom of each of these strips fasten one of the new safety pins by which to hold up the dress. By taking it up carefully at these four points it may be lifted evenly from the ground and held in place without creasing.

INEZ REDDING, Chelsea, Mass.

Mrs. Isador Clark, whose suggestions have helped the Bees before, wants to describe a home-made flower stand, which might be copied in many a home before the winter months.

"I want to tell the Bees of some things which a woman can make and are useful. Get a box as long as your window is wide, and just as high as the window stool, and about two feet wide; put casters on the bottom of the box so it can be moved easily, and have the side towards the room fashioned into a door with hinges, the door to be the size of the box, and finished with a fastening of some kind; if nothing better can be found a piece of strap nailed on to the lid at one end, with a small hole in the other end of leather to slip over the nail, driven into the box for that purpose, will furnish a cheap and convenient fastening. Get four rods made at the blacksmith's, each 12 inches high, with threads in one end two inches deep and two burrs to each. At the other end of rods two inches deep with two burrs, bore four holes in top of box one-fourth of the distance from front and back of box and five inches from end of box; place a burr on the deepest thread of the rods and put in the box and push up through the hole and fasten in place with the other burr, and place the other three rods in the same way. Get a half inch board and on the under side put a piece of lath across so it will strengthen the end of the shelf. The shelf should project just an inch at each end beyond the rods. Bore a hole in each corner of shelf right through the lath, which should be on the under side. Now place the first four burrs on the four rods down as far as the thread, then slip the shelf on the rods and then fasten the shelf on with the remaining four burrs; this shelf will be 12 inches wide with a six inch shelf at its base on two sides and five inches at each end. You could fill the rods with spools if you wished, before placing on the top shelf, and then paint it white all over, and if you are clever with the brush finish as you like. Finished in gilt it would be lovely. Into this box set your flowers, when you are afraid they will freeze, and move into the centre of the room, and with a blanket or something of the kind thrown over them

HOME-MADE FLOWER STAND.

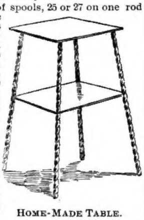
you can sleep and feel that your flower pets are safe from the cold, and, I assure you, you will have something you are proud of. The top shelf will hold two rows of flower pots of good size, or three smaller ones, with a row all around the lower part; of course the largest ones, the farthest from the sun, so as not to place the small ones in the shade. I must tell you how I am going to make a cabinet, and it will be pretty. A box five feet high, 28 inches wide and six inches deep, is to be lined with garnet plush, then light airy shelves fastened at the back invisibly and at the front with rods and spools; the shelves and rods of spools to be painted white with white enamel finish penciled with gold. At the top put a brass rod on which may be hung a curtain of china silk, or not, according to taste, but it is useful to keep out dust. The rods will hold the shelves, but will only be on the front side, the front only being open; or a better way would be to have glass doors and shut them up tight. In this receptacle your curiosities are safe and may be admired by your friends. The outside should be finished in cherry or walnut color or black, according to taste."

Here is an excellent suggestion:

"During the vacation days the paper-covered book is in its glory, and we have them in every state of freshness or dilapidation. Some of the volumes are worthy of a better fate than that which too often befalls them. And those who have suffered from the carelessness of the friendly borrower will know how to appreciate the book covers that are in vogue. They are made so as to be used for any ordinary sized book, after a loose fashion, as the idea is to protect and not to adorn. Select a piece of silk; cut it sixteen inches long and eight inches broad. Find a lining of any suitable material and color and smaller than the outside, so that the silk may be turned over for a depth of two inches at each end. The part turned over must be over-seamed on the upper and lower edges, and across them and down those that are turned in sew a gilt or silken cord. This is to be slipped over the paper volume, allowing the covers, back and front, to pass under the hems. Sew a ribbon to the middle of each edge and fasten the cover on the book by tying it in a bow. A cover made in a similar fashion of clear, gray linen, tied with bright ribbon, is almost as beautiful and more serviceable. One made of pure white linen tied with pale blue ribbons is pretty and useful."

Speaking of home-made furniture, O. M. Knapp tells how he made a small table or stand that proved very useful.

"It is made of spools, 25 or 27 on one rod or leg. Take four iron rods each one-fourth inch in diameter, as long as you wish them. Take for the top a well-seasoned piece of hard wood, for the centre board a piece of pine one-half inch thick. Run the rods through the spools, then through the centre board; glue to the board the spools up to the top, when you are ready for the top board. Bore one-fourth inch holes halfway through the top board, nail with small brads or tiny nails, and glue together. Paint with white paint and gild edges."



HOME-MADE TABLE.

Many of you have heard of making hassocks of tin cans, and as I have had several inquiries how to make them, I give this, which I do not pretend is original with me. It is useful, however, and is available for everyone. Save up your cans until you have seven of the same size. Remove the tops and paste several thicknesses of newspaper smoothly around each can. Then place one in the centre of a large sheet of plain paper and put around it as many as you can, all sides touching adjacent cans and one in the centre. With a pencil trace very carefully the exact outline made on the paper by the group, then remove the cans and cut out the outline. This serves for a pattern, and is used, enlarged a quarter or a half inch all around, to cut out two shapes of coarse, strong stuff like ticking, denim or burlap. These two pieces, together with a strip the height of the cans, form a rough cover for the footstool. Stitch the strip all around one of the pieces, then draw it over the cans as they are set in place; it will fit in snugly around each. Now turn all upside down and sew the other piece strongly on. The solid ends of the cans are of course to come upward for the top of the stool. Pad this upper side with cotton. Then cut and put on, in the same way as you did the coarser cover, one made of the material desired for the footstool—rep, cretonne, tapestry or with odd pieces of Brussels carpeting—any fabric you consider suitable, finished with upholsterer's cord to match around top and bottom. The stool is firm, durable and satisfactory in every respect.

QUEEN BEE.

TOMATO CAN HASSOCK.

POINTS ON PEARLS.

ODD FACTS ABOUT THEM FURNISHED BY AN EXPERT.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

THE famous expert in gems, Mr. George F. Kunz, has been gathering some facts about pearls for the United States Fish Commission.

It would appear that the most remarkable collections of pearls ever got together were owned by Indians in the Miami and Scioto valleys in prehistoric times. During an epoch previous to the landing of Columbus,gems of this sort were obtained from the streams of that region in extraordinary numbers and frequently of great size. In fact, their production was on a scale far beyond that of modern days. They were derived from fresh-water mussels of the kind known as unios. Within quite recent years these mussels have been regularly fished for, many thousands of dollars worth of pearls being secured, but the yield has been quickly exhausted.

The Indians of the region mentioned were comparatively far advanced in civilization long before the first white men reached America. They used ornaments of copper and understood the weaving of cloth. Their primitive jewelers drilled holes in bears' teeth, in which pearls were set. Pearls were also commonly employed for adorning various garments, to which they were sewn. For this purpose holes were bored through the pearls with a heated copper wire.

Persons of distinction among these aborigines owned great quantities of pearls. It is very probable that the possession of such gems was a prerogative of rank in the tribe. When these important individuals died, their pearls were buried with them. Thus in the great burial mounds only some of the skeletons are found to have been interred with pearls. In one mound enough pearls to overflow a gallon measure were obtained with two skeletons. They ranged from the size of a small millet-seed to a diameter of more than two-thirds of an inch.

Not a few of these pearls might suitably have decorated a royal crown. But, alas! they were all totally spoiled. Some had suffered from the action of fire, while others had become decayed through contact with water filtering through the soil. By the latter cause many of them had been cemented together in masses. Such is always the condition of pearls recovered after a long burial. Unlike precious stones, they are subject to decay and must be kept very carefully in order to be preserved. The pearls of ancient times have all vanished from the world.

Very few of the pearls obtained from Indian mounds retain any trace of their original lustre. By careful peeling an occasional one has been made to yield a smaller gem with a fair "orient," as the peculiar pearly sheen is called. From one group of mounds in the Little Miami valley half a bushel of pearls were secured—nearly every one blackened by heat, some cracked, and all worthless except as curiosities. Another group yielded nearly 500,000 pearls. Fifteen good-sized boxes were filled with them. Great numbers of bears' teeth set with pearls were dug up.

Wherever pearls are found they are fished for with such lack of discretion as soon to destroy the supply. This was the case in the Bay of California, which at one time possessed some of the richest and most productive banks of pearl oysters in the world. Similar conditions threatening the destruction of the pearl fishery in the bay of Ago, Japan, the department of agriculture of that country undertook not long ago to increase the crop by artifice. The bay in question is 3 miles long and 2 miles broad, and, penetrating inland for some distance, its waters are always calm.

Pearl oysters have been abundant along the shores of the bay at a depth of 6 to 35 feet, the bottom being sandy with a scant growth of seaweeds. In fact, the gem-bearing mollusks were so easily got at that their extermination was only a question of a short time. Fortunately, no better place for the purpose of artificial propagation could well be imagined. Accordingly, the government authorities tried the experiment of propagating the bivalves by the same means as are adopted for breeding true edible oysters, collecting the "spat" on tiles, ropes, etc.

In this way the value of the fishery has been increased tenfold within a few years. The Japanese government believes that the same method might be profitably employed with the pearl oyster elsewhere. It may be that some day the banks of the Gulf of California, which have furnished some of the most beautiful pearls now in existence, will be made to resume their former productiveness. In Paris, by the way, artificial pearls are now made by a new process. Beads are cut from real mother-of-pearl shells, and these are coated with silver, which gives them almost the same specific gravity as real pearls, while the silver lends a lustre somewhat like that of a gray pearl.

The shells of many extinct species of mollusks—such as the coiled ammonites, which were related to the modern nautilus—had linings of pearl. Many of them have been so well preserved in the rocks that, after the lapse of millions of years, they retain a beautiful lustre. Baculites and ammonites dug from the Cretaceous deposits of Dakota and elsewhere are gorgeous in their coloring, more rich and glowing than any other pearly material known. Sometimes they look like masses of opal.

A beautiful marble obtained from Carinthia is known as "fire marble." It is made into snuff boxes and other elegant little articles. It is very rare and costly. The material is a kind of limestone filled with fossilized shells, the colors of which are so splendid that the substance is easily mistaken for fire opal.

Among the most valuable pearls are the rose-tinted ones produced by a species of conch found in the neighborhood of the West Indies. A single oyster may yield at the same time both white and purple pearls. Concretions of peacock-hued material are sometimes found in the abalone, which fetch high prices as pearls. Clams of the common sort sometimes afford pearls of good size, but they look so much like ordinary pearl buttons as to be worthless. Occasionally pearls are found in very curious shapes, so as to represent, with the addition of a little gold or enamel, heads of animals and other objects for mounting in scarf-pins and such ornaments. One was sold at a large price not long ago which strikingly resembled the head of Michael Angelo. The finest pearls of the world come from the Persian Gulf, where the oyster beds produce $2,000,000 per annum. In the Sulu Sea women do the diving for pearls.

Black pearls fetch higher prices than white ones in Europe. A black pearl found in the Gulf of California in 1881 sold in Paris for $10,000. Means have been found to make pearls of any color black in a bath of nitrate of silver, or to turn them to rose-color, lilac, gray, or what not. However, experts know how to detect such deceptions. Fashion affects the pearl market. Black pearls have been the rage for some time past. The biggest pearl known is 2 inches in length and weighs 3 ounces.

A pearl is formed about a grain of sand or other foreign body that finds lodgment in the oyster. It is made of the same secretion that composes the pearly lining of the shell of the mollusk. Now and then a little fish will get caught in a pearl oyster and be itself transformed into a pearl. The most extraordinary pearl in the world is known as the "Southern Cross." It consists of a group of nine pearls naturally grown together in so regular a manner as to form an almost perfect Latin cross measuring an inch and a half in length. The superstitious discoverer of this surprising freak, off the coast of west Australia, buried it because he was afraid.

The most beautiful pearl in existence is in a museum at Moscow. It is perfectly spherical, and so brilliant and pure as to appear almost transparent. Weight, 90 grains. The imperial crown of Austria contains a pearl of 300 carats. There is a pearl in the Spanish regalia weighing 400 carats. It was obtained from the Gulf of California. Green pearls come from the Marianne archipelago. Two big ruby-red pearls were found at the Ceylon fishery 30 years ago and are owned by the rajah of the Sulu Islands.

Some of the finest pearls in the world are owned by Queen Marguerite of Italy, the biggest of them being the size of a robin's egg. Her husband gives her pearls on every anniversary of their marriage. A necklace of gray pearls belonging to the Empress of Russia is appraised at $500,000. The most valuable collection of black pearls in existence is the property of the Empress of Austria. The most beautiful pearl in existence adorns the sword-hilt of the Shah of Persia; its price was $500,000. Pope Leo's tiara is adorned with a pink pearl worth $150,000. Marie Mugnier, the French actress, owns a cascade of pearls worth $400,000. What are known as "Roman pearls" are made by lining globules of glass with an iridescent substance derived from fish-scales.

SOME VIRGINIA GAMES.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY FANNY A. EDWARDS.

A PART of the Northern Neck of Virginia known as Fairfield's, is by visitors said to be "a place to have a good time,"especially among the young people. Bounded on one side by the Chesapeake Bay, this country offers many natural advantages for summer sports, such as picnics on the bay-shore, sails, fishing parties, etc. In winter dull times are prevented by an occasional novel party, oyster roasts, social gatherings (where new games are introduced), etc. Below is a description of some of the amusements of the young people of Fairfield's.

A Straw Ride: The wagon-drivers (young men of the neighborhood) are provided with large wagons adorned with flags—the largest bearing the name of the driver's post-office. Flags are also on the horses and drivers. Straw in the bottoms of the wagons furnish seats. Every driver in his fine turn-out calls for the girls whose names are on his list. The boys are not called for, and if they are not calling on the girls, are apt to be left. The wagons are soon filled with merry girls and boys, and the drive to the bay-shore is delightful. Supper, provided by the girls, is served on the beach; also confectionery, provided by the boys. Moonlight strolls on the shore are enjoyed, but more enjoyable is the moonlight straw ride home.

Charades: The company is divided into two parts: one to make the charade, the other to guess it. The party for acting the charade leaves the room. Soon after they re-enter and act the word, and if the other party guess it, they can go out and make a charade, and the successful party take their place in guessing. For instance, if the word Washington is taken, it is announced as a proper noun of three syllables; two acts. The first act may be carried out by a division of the party in the act of washing—rubbing their handkerchiefs on boards or there may be two or three of the party dressed as washwomen, with basins of water and clothes to wash. The second act may be carried out by a division of the party in the act of lifting something very heavy, while one of the party may remark that "it weighs 2,000 pounds." If the word infancy is taken, the first acts represents an inn; the second, something fancy. Odd-fellows, Lord Baltimore, Comfort and Shakespeare are good words. A good deal of originality is brought out in this game.

A Masquerade Party: The young folks meet at an appointed place to put on their disguises. Every girl is given a slip of paper with her number on it, and a collection of corresponding numbers is carried to the boys' room. Each boy draws a number, and gets the girl corresponding to his number, whom he takes to the place appointed for the party. Sometimes a sailor boy goes out with a sister of charity, Columbus with Red Riding Hood, Martha and George Washington, and so on. The fun for each couple comes in trying to find out each other. Some of the boys go into big mud holes and try to almost upset the buggy to get the girl excited, and to hear her squeal. Sometimes they get badly fooled, and say the wrong things to the right girl, and vice versa; and it is so hard sometimes to keep from saying anything. The face masks are taken off at the house where the party is held; and there is much fun in correcting mistakes, and teasing the ones who were fooled. The young folks are then entertained in any way selected by the hostess. A confectionery supper may be served if liked.

A Bonnet and Necktie Party: Every lady takes material for a bonnet, and every gentleman material for a necktie; these materials, with needles, cotton, etc., are placed on separate tables in one room, (or otherwise, as the hostess may choose.) Every gentleman chooses a lady, (or they may be coupled by numbering, as in the masquerade party) and proceeds to the bonnet and necktie room, where the gentleman selects his lady's bonnet and trimmings, and she selects material for his necktie. They then return to the parlor, where the bonnets are trimmed and the neckties made. The ladies appear about as awkward in cutting and making four-in-hand ties, as the gentlemen in threading needles and trimming the bonnets. The peculiar tastes about such things displayed by the gentlemen, and ladies as well, is amusing. For one lady of blonde complexion was trimmed a buff Neapolitan bonnet with buff ribbon; in front was a large yellow rose. The loops of ribbon were pinned down with mourning pins. Sometimes the bonnets and neckties are worn out to supper. Prizes are awarded for the best trimmed bonnet and the best made necktie. Booby prizes are also given.

CURIOUS FACTS.

Queen Victoria has fifty-five dogs.

London has a population of 4,754,312.

A certain kind of tree in Venezuela yields milk.

Women commercial travelers are common in Europe.

The English language has two hundred and fifty thousand words.

On an average, only 18,500 widows remarry, as against 27,000 widowers.

An old sickle blade found near Thebes is four thousand years old, proving that wrought iron was of early origin.

A German has invented a shell filled with a chemical combination called a fog creator. When it explodes it enshrouds in darkness the enemy at whom it is thrown.

It is said that bananas yield more to the acre than any other fruit. The produce of an acre of bananas is one hundred and thirty-three times as great as that of an acre of wheat.

Bucuananquina is the name of a new species of fibrous material recently found in the United States of Columbia, South America. It is transparent and incombustible and has many of the remarkable qualities of asbestos.

The longest reach of railway without a curve is said to be on the Argentine Pacific Railway, from Buenos Ayres, to the Andes. For two hundred and eleven miles it is without a curve and has no embankment or cut of more than two or three feet.

The phrase "dead as a door nail" originated from the fact that in early days the old-fashioned knocker struck against a large nail which served as the plate. As this plate or nail was struck many more times than any other, it was assumed to be deader than other nails.

A California man has invented a way of attaching a mast to a common bicycle, so that the rider can sail across water without dismounting. The sail is attached to a ten foot mast and an eight foot boom, and weighs six pounds and nine ounces, costing only about ten dollars.

A tramp called at a house in Indiana a while ago and demanded something to eat. It was refused, and he made an insulting remark to the woman who answered him. She seized a fence picket and chased him four blocks. There she seized him by the hair and thrashed him until he was insensible.

It is now the custom to use the words man and woman instead of lady and gentleman, as was formerly the fashion. Since every washwoman insists upon being called a lady, the most sensible women prefer to be called woman, and refer to the opposite sex as men. Never, under any circumstances, is it admissible to refer to men as "gents."

Not one person in a thousand knows why well bred people cover the mouth with the hand when yawning. Four or five hundred years ago there was a common superstition in Europe that the devil always stood ready to enter a man's body and take possession of it, and that he much preferred to go down the mouth. According to this superstition, the devil waited a reasonable length of time, and if the man did not open his mouth the devil made him yawn; and then, when his mouth was open, jumped down his throat. The people believed, however, that if they made the sign of the cross over the mouth, the devil would be scared away. Country people in Italy and Spain, still cross themselves in that way, but most other people have forgotten the cross sign, but keep out the devil simply by placing the hand before the lips.

Answers to Correspondents.

"JANIE" OF VERMONT asks for information as to the length a girl of fifteen should wear her dresses. Unless she is exceptionally tall for her age, she should have them come to the tops of her boots and dress in inconspicuous colors.

PRIZEWINNER, BROOKLYN, N. Y. You win the wager. The prices paid under Comfort's Nutshell Story Club offer are higher than those paid by any other publication for short stories of 1,000 words.

TAXIDERMIST, HELENA, MONT. The best book for your purpose is Wood's Natural History. By reading "A Paradise Open to All" in this issue you will see how you can get a copy of this wonderful work free.

R. L. C. GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. By reference to pages 294 and 295 of the American Newspaper Directory of 1894, you will find that COMFORT has the largest guaranteed circulation of any paper in America. You therefore win your bet.

M. L. H. OF TEXAS wants to know the best way to keep carpets in summer. The best plan, if one must use carpets in summer, is to keep them thoroughly swept and dusted, which will keep away insects, as far as possible. But a better way is not to use thick carpets at all. Bare floors of hard wood or even painted ones with rugs are more fashionable as well as more sensible, and the beautiful Japanese mattings which cost little and come not only in regular carpet widths but are now woven to fit all sizes of rooms, or as druggets and rugs, are fast superseding carpets.

"A SUBSCRIBER" wants to know how to wash silk waists. Make a good suds with pure white soap with a teaspoonful of borax added to a gallon of suds. Rub gently and draw the waist through the hands carefully, but not wring. A second suds may be necessary and several rinsing waters should be used with a little borax in each. Iron before perfectly dry.

"MIRIAM" OF EAST TENNESSEE has a great deal of trouble in making yeast bread and wants to know how to overcome it. Try leaving yeast alone for a while and use the best baking powder instead, which is referred to in our Kitchen Chats. Every reader is recommended to send to the Royal Baking Powder Company (whose address will be found in another part of this paper) for a copy of their "Royal Baker and Pastry Cook," which gives a thousand first class recipes, by saying you saw it in COMFORT, you will get the book free.

THE MINISTER FOUND A GOOD KNIFE AFTER SEARCHING FOR YEARS.

Oskaloosa, Iowa, July, 6, 1894.

MAHER & GROSH, Toledo, Ohio.

GENTLEMEN:—I have been looking for years for a good knife, and have been unable to find one. Your knife, 034, was received in due time, and gives perfect satisfaction. It is the best knife I have ever seen. Enclosed $1.50 for which please forward the Chauncey M. Depew knife with case. Respectfully,

EDWIN C. HOLMAN, Pastor Cong'l Church.

Answer Maher & Grosh advertisement in this issue and you will find just what you want also.—ED.

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August was named in honor of Augustus Cæsar, the Roman Emperor. Originally August had but thirty days, and February had the extra one, with thirty for leap year.

The sardonyx is said to be the lucky stone for those born in August who wish for conjugal felicity. The onyx, however, was formerly thought to contain an imprisoned devil which wakes at sunset and brings bad dreams to its possessor.

In these days when athletics are in the highest favor, and seem to be out-ranking scientific studies in some colleges, the recent decision of President Eliot of Harvard College is of widespread interest. He would allow college boys a great deal of scope in the matter of athletics, both in ball playing and in rowing, but he does not believe that the younger boys should be permitted to engage in inter-collegiate games, or in any matches on any but their own grounds. He is properly alive to the value of athletics in a school curriculum, as a valuable aid to the process of turning out from the University symmetrically developed graduates, but he would restrict foot ball games to such a degree as to lessen the number and the violence of the collisions between the players. A good many foot ball specialists agree in this, and have long been aware that the game must in some way be stripped of its features of roughness and danger. By taking the lead in this, and other reforms in college sports, the Harvard President is doubtless blazing the way for other universities towards such improvements as will bring athletics into true relations with the college course.

A truly unfortunate day was the 24th of last June, the day when President Carnot of France was assassinated. Regulus, in his predictions for June, said: "It is feared that there will be some shocking drowning disaster to a pleasure party." On that very day a tug-boat went out off Sandy Hook, at the entrance to New York Harbor, and was overtaken by an accident, which has not yet been satisfactorily accounted for, whereby over forty people were drowned. On the same day a steamer was returning from an excursion up the Hudson river, N. Y., when an accident happened to the machinery, killing two men outright and injuring hundreds more in the panic that followed. In another place a yacht upset in placid water and drowned a family party of five, while several single cases of drowning occurred on the same day. Regulus also predicted intense heat during the latter part of June; and never has there been so hot a June during the memory of the present generation of men. Again, he foretold for the latter part of the month "anarchistic tendencies" and such "recruiting of the membership of secret organizations" as would render it necessary for authorities to be on the alert. This was carried out by the widespread railroad strike on several roads centering into Chicago, in which over 700,000 men were concerned. It is quite worth while to follow out Regulus' predictions in these columns.

The income tax which has taken so much time in the United States Senate the past few months, has aroused more general interest throughout the country, than any subject for legislation has for a long time. The theory of all taxation is that to be just it must be equal. A man with a dollar a year income has an interest in the support of the government, as well as he with an income of $10,000. At the same time he should not be taxed as much, as there are more men with small incomes than with large. If the country must have an income tax at all it should be a just one and fairly collected; for an uneven distribution of the burdens of taxation is manifestly unjust. It is wholly unjust to say that a man with $3,000 a year shall be taxed for it while the man who has an income of $2,900 a year goes free. If there is to be an income tax, everyone who is benefited by it should contribute his or her just proportion. In Saxony, one of the provinces of Central Europe, the income tax is the fairest in the world, and under it everybody who has any income at all contributes something to the government. The tax begins on annual incomes of $71.40 with one-fifth of 1 per cent, and runs up to 3 per cent; so that a person with that income pays annually about 14 cents; but on all incomes above $1,713.60 a tax of 3 per cent is paid, and everything that comes yearly on the credit side of a man's account is taxed. If a man owns a house and lives in it he is taxed on the rent he would pay if he rented it, and the same is true of the products of a man's labor which he uses in his family, whether he be farmer or manufacturer, but he can deduct interest on debts, insurance and repairs. The fairness of the Saxony system makes it tolerable to the inhabitants.

An event of quite as much importance in political Europe, as the assassination of Presidents Lincoln and Garfield here, was the murder of President Carnot of France on June 25, while he was on his way to attend the theatre. The United States has a peculiar sympathy with France because that country has a republican government like our own; and consequently the news of President Carnot's assassination sent a thrill of horror over every American citizen. He was visiting in Lyons, where the event was made a festive occasion. After a day of honors which ended in a banquet, President Carnot started in a carriage for the theatre where a performance was to be given in his honor. On the way there, while the carriage was surrounded by a cheering multitude, a man was seen to rush toward and jump on the steps of the carriage. The gleam of a knife was seen for an instant and President Carnot fell back in his seat, deathly pale. The Mayor of Lyons, who was sitting beside him, immediately struck the fellow in the face and knocked him down. He was captured at once and it was with difficulty that the crowds were prevented from killing him. M. Carnot was taken at once from the carriage and placed in a bed in the Mayor's official residence, where he died within three hours. President Carnot's administration had been marked by honesty of purpose, conservatism and the respect and confidence even, of his personal enemies. In his death France has lost a sincere, straight-forward official, who was a credit to his country and who governed it with prudence and patriotic devotion. A most singular feature of the matter to COMFORT readers is the fact that "Regulus" in his predictions for June in this paper, foretold the assassination of some public official by an anarchist.

The case of Mr. Erastus Wiman, who a few months ago was a millionaire and a highly respected citizen of New York, is singular and pitiful, but it is also, unfortunately, an illustration of the outcome of modern times. The spirit of getting rich, which is not content to make money by the old-fashioned slow and conservative methods, which is so common in America to-day, is the destruction of many a man who starts out in the world honestly, and who stands before the world as a model of all the virtues. He was one of the few men of great wealth who was supposed to take an active interest in public movements, and who was one of the leading men of his day. He had been accustomed to handling large sums of money for other people, and as is too often the case, was detected in embezzling other peoples' funds. It would not seem that there was any necessity for this, but as with other Napoleons of finance of to-day, the passion for acquisition became superior to conscience and judgment, and in a moment of emergency wrought his downfall. Possessed of ample means of his own, standing before the community as a high minded, progressive and public-spirited man, with everything in his favor, it is hard to understand how he could, even in a moment of weakness and aberration of the moral vision, have stooped to such fatal folly. He has been sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor for five years and a half, and the millionaire of a few months ago is to-day a "jail bird." His is but a single instance in these modern times, and illustrates a lesson for every man of to-day. Let those in possession of moderate incomes be content, and avoid this spirit of eagerness to make ten dollars out of one dollar, honestly or dishonestly, but any way to make it, as they would a plague. "Slow but sure" is the best motto after all.

OCEAN GARDENING.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

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THIS is an industry offering great opportunities which have been overlooked up to date. There are many vegetables growing in the sea which are both palatable and nutritious. Among them there is not one poisonous species, so far as is known. One great advantage possessed by them is that they require no cultivation, but may be gathered in almost unlimited quantities by any harvester who knows enough to appreciate them. What is needed is an education of the popular taste in respect to the merits of such delicacies for the table.

It is true that a few species of seaweeds are used as food to some extent in various parts of the world. Probably the best known of them is the so-called "Irish moss," which grows far down on rocks that are only uncovered by low spring tides. It is obtained mostly from the west coast of Ireland, and, after being bleached by exposure to sun and rain, is exported to the United States and elsewhere. "Dulse" is sold on the streets of Edinburgh and Glasgow and green and pink "laver" is occasionally employed as an ingredient for soups. Another familiar marine vegetable is "Japanese isinglass," which contains so great a percentage of gelatine as to possess eight times the gelatinizing power of ordinary gelatine. Housewives might utilize it to advantage but for the fact that it will not melt in the mouth.

The taste for vegetables of the sea must be acquired, but those who eat them become very fond of them. They ought to become a valuable source of food supply some day. Laver and dulse are common on the northwest coast of this country and are eaten by the Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Islands and other tribes, who prepare them by drying and pressing them into compact blocks. When wanted for food, slices are cut and boiled. In British Columbia and Alaska deer browse eagerly on sea-mosses during the long run-out of the spring tides. Seaweeds are much eaten in China and Japan, where thousands of tons are gathered annually, packed in bales and shipped to all parts of those countries. The plants are mixed in soups and with rice, fish and vegetables.

One advantage of this kind of diet in that part of the world is that it gives a salt taste to whatever it is mingled with. This is an important economy for the poorer classes, who are obliged to pay very dear for salt, particularly if they live far away from the ocean. Also these weeds have an aromatic flavor of the sea, which is agreeable to the eastern palate. The Chinese manufacture gelatine from seaweeds, which is used by bakers for making biscuits, by paper-makers and by manufacturers of stuffs, for stiffening. By the Malays a kind of seaweed is collected which, boiled down, produces a glue called "agar-agar." This material is utilized by physicians almost exclusively for experiments in breeding bacteria.

Seaweeds form in the Atlantic Ocean great banks, often extending for miles. They propagate as they float, being supported at the surface of the water by bulbs filled with air. In these floating meadows of marine vegetables exist enormous stores of material in readiness for use by man, but no practicable method has thus far been devised for bringing the stuff profitably to market or for spreading it upon the soil. Seaweeds, applied as manure, possess remarkable properties. As a fertilizer they are unsurpassed, and they act with wonderful rapidity, producing at once most plenteous crops from soil that has been unproductive. On the French shore of the British Channel 2,250,000 tons of seaweeds are gathered annually with drags and rakes for manure.

A very remarkable kind of seaweed is the "giant kelp," which lines the shores along the northwest coast of the United States. The stem of the plant attains a length of 300 feet, bearing at its top an air-bulb, from which a tuft of streamer-like leaves 30 or 40 feet long extends. The greater part of the stem is no thicker than a common window-cord, very strong and flexible. The natives in that region have used it for centuries for fish-lines. Is is prepared by soaking, stretching and drying, being finally knotted together in lines sometimes 1,000 feet in length for deep-sea fishing. The upper part of the stem is much enlarged and hollow. This portion was employed by the Indians formerly to hold dogfish-oil.

If the long fronds of the giant kelp be observed after exposure to rain, little sacs of fluid are found to be formed on their surface. When these are cut, a glairy colorless liquid escapes. This is a very remarkable substance. It has fourteen times the gumminess of starch and is thirty-seven times as gummy as gum-arabic. When evaporated on slate, it assumes the form of thin sheets resembling gelatine and very flexible. These sheets can be written or printed upon. It is said that such sheets are used in parts of Japan for windows, being very translucent. This curious stuff is useful for various commercial purposes, such as dyeing. It is excellent for thickening soups and puddings, and is especially adapted to take the place of gum-arabic in the manufacture of jujubes. After it has been separated from the kelp, the residue furnishes an excellent material for paper.

Patents have been granted at various times for making paper out of seaweeds, and exclusive rights were obtained a few years ago by an inventor for utilizing these vegetables, dissolved and pressed, in the manufacture of imitation horn for cutlery, picture-frames, etc. From Irish moss is obtained the well-known cosmetic for the hair called "bandoline." A similar plant is collected in large quantities below high-water mark on Cape Cod, and is sold for making puddings and "sea-moss farina." It is also used by calico printers and by brewers for clarifying. Carbonate of soda used to be manufactured from seaweeds, of which the Hebrides alone furnished 20,000 tons annually. It was employed in soap-making and glass-works up to 1845, when the seaweeds were superseded by a chemical process.

Seaweeds are used in commerce for the manufacture of bromine and iodine. The world's supply of iodine is all got from burned kelp. The immense value of this substance in medicine and in photography renders it by far the most important of all seaweed products. The average yield of iodine from a ton of kelp is about 5 pounds. The proportion of iodine in sea-water is so small that it requires 30,000,000 pounds of the fluid to furnish one pound of the material to the plants.

In Scotland and elsewhere seaweeds are used in winter for feeding horses and cattle. Upholsterers employ them for stuffing furniture, as a substitute for horsehair; also for mattresses and beds, because their aromatic odor keeps away insects. Packers utilize them for wrapping fragile objects, and chemists obtain from them no end of chlorides, sulphates, silicates, and other such valuable products. In conclusion the writer should acknowledge his obligation to Mr. James G. Swan for a portion of his material.

EDITOR'S NOTE. The following rules govern the publication of matter in this department.

Contributors must without exception be regular subscribers to Comfort, and every contribution must bear the writer's own name and post office address in full.

Original letters only, which deal with matters of general interest will be published. They must be as brief, plain and correct as the writers can make them and may vary in length from one hundred to four hundred words. Only letters of exceptional merit and interest may reach 550. Contributors must write on one side of their paper only.

Every month a number of prize monograms composed of the writer's initials, will be awarded to those sending the best contributions. These monograms, which will be most desirable ornaments for stationery, cards, etc., will be printed in connection with the respective letters, and new electrotypes of same will be mailed, post paid, to the prize winners.

$10 CASH PRIZES $10

In addition to the foregoing, the following cash prizes will be paid monthly:

1st.	For the best original letter	$3.00
2nd.	" " second best original letter,	2.50
3rd.	" " third " " "	2.00
4th.	" " fourth " " "	1.50
5th.	" " fifth " " "	1.00

Competitors for these monthly cash prizes must *comply with all the above rules*, and in addition must bring at least one new Cousin into the COMFORT circle; that is, they must send one new subscriber with each letter, together with 25 cents for a yearly subscription.

These cash prizes will be announced monthly in this department.

No premiums will be given for subscriptions sent in under this Prize Offer.

All communications must be addressed to Aunt Minerva, care of COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

CASH PRIZE WINNERS.

George F. Crosby, First Prize,	$3.00
Matie Alter, Second Prize,	2.50
Christiane Petersen, Third Prize,	2.00
Grace L. Enright, Fourth Prize,	1.50
Bob Scott Runnion, Fifth Prize,	1.00

PRIZE MONOGRAM WINNERS.

Candace L. Smith, Alice M. Kemp,
Mary E. Hargadine, Clara Bowen,
Charles E. Maxwell, May Adams,
P. J. McLaughlin, Allie M. Smith,
Lillian Grey.

IF there are any cousins who have not read Longfellow's poem on "The Wayside Inn," I hope you will look it up right away; and then you will find the following description of that famous place all the more interesting.

"Although many of the cousins live far from Massachusetts, they must all be interested in the landmarks of old Colonial days, and are of course well acquainted with the 'Red Horse Tavern,' now

THE WAYSIDE INN.

called The Wayside Inn, as described in Longfellow's 'Tales of a Wayside Inn.' They may, therefore, be glad to knew just how it appears to-day, after having braved New England weather for 203 years. The house, which is in Sudbury, Mass., was in the Howe family for four generations, but quite recently it has been purchased by gentlemen living in the vicinity of Boston who have had it thoroughly repaired with a view to preserving as long as possible this ancient landmark. Outwardly it has changed little, though the 'sign' is no longer there on which the Red Horse pranced in the days of which Longfellow wrote. The bar-room has the same gate-like lattice which shuts down over the bar; the old iron safe is there and the fireplace and black andirons. In the old kitchen is a very large fireplace with crane and kettles. In the other rooms on the lower floor, the fireplaces, iron latches on the doors and small panes of glass in the windows are about the only relics left of other days. But up stairs we find the room in which Lafayette slept unchanged. The furniture is small and rude and the paper on the walls very quaint. The man in charge says he has to keep a sharp eye on people who come to see the place, or there would not be a shred of the paper left, as visitors are crazy for a piece as a souvenir. In the attic is a little shelf-like bed placed very high against the wall, (with a little ladder by which to climb into it,) in which they say a dwarf used to sleep. The place is surrounded by immense elm and oak trees, in the trunk of one of which, it being hollow and having an opening on one side, 13 children can squeeze at one time. The old house is now a great resort for sleighing parties from the neighboring towns, as the large dining and ball rooms are just the places for a good romping time on a cold winter night when the wide, deep fireplaces are filled with great burning logs."

GEORGE F. CROSBY, 17 Milk St., Boston, Mass.

The next letter was received some months ago, but I have held it over until now, because it is during the months of August and September that one sees great fields of hops in some parts of the country. And to those who have never seen them, let me say there is nothing prettier than such a field with the graceful vines waving in the breeze.

"Here in central New York, the farmers are mostly hop-growers. In August, the ripened fields of waving grain, and the faded green of the recently mown meadows, form a pleasing contrast against the dark green of the hop fields; while a near approach reveals the soft green of the growing hops against the broad, dark leaves of the vine. In September, the work of picking begins. The hop fields present a most forlorn aspect, after the pickers have passed through; nothing but blackened heaps remain of vines and leaves, while in the grower's hop house are piled the dried hops. Nowhere can a more various people be found than mingle together in hop picking. All classes flock here; some for recreation and change, some for health, others for the great essential—money. From early sunrise until evening the fields resound with merry shouts and laughter. The pickers stand at oblong boxes divided into four compartments, each holding ten bushels. The vines are brought to the pickers by the box tender. He also 'sacks' the hops as the boxes are filled. The hop house—a great, barnlike structure—is divided into four divisions—upper and lower storage rooms and upper and lower kilns. The lower kiln has an earth floor and in its centre is placed a large furnace. Around the bottom of the lower kiln's walls are ranged the draft windows, which, properly managed, drive the heat to the kiln above, where the hops are spread on a latticed floor. The hops are spread and the fire started in the early evening. One night's work generally cures a kiln. Some growers are expert in hop curing; others are dependent on professional 'driers' as they are called. Sulphur is burned to give the desired color. When the sulphur basins are filled, it is a pretty sight to watch the curling blue flames as they leap up in the air. In baling time, the hops are shoved through the hop shute into the press in the lower storage room; two strong men, their feet encased in heavy boots, stamp the hops into the press. Then the heavy hop-weight is placed on top, levers with their correct arrangements are attached at each end, and the bale is 'run down.' The hops are baled in a strong cloth made for the purpose, called hop baling, or sacking. A hop bale weighs from one hundred and seventy-five to two hundred pounds. The raising of hops has been called 'nothing but a lottery.' For instance: In 1882 the exorbitant price of one dollar and ten cents was paid. The ensuing year many a man of small means, dazzled by the fabulous prices, invested his all in hop raising. By the time the new hop fields were in good bearing condition, the price per pound had fallen to nine and ten cents."

MATIE ALTER, Buel, Montgomery Co., N. Y.

Next comes a word from an old world cousin:

"The most picturesque and romantic view I have ever seen is that of an old ruin in Denmark. It was beautifully situated upon a hill by a small, clear lake, and surrounded on all sides by tall trees. Many were the traditions related of this old castle—the most interesting was the following: The castle had many hundred years ago been inhabited by a lord named Jorgen, famous for his noble birth, his riches and his beautiful daughter, Christine. The young lady soon attracted the attention and admiration of several noble knights. They requested of the father his daughter's hand, but were all rejected by Christine. One day while hunting, the lord met three of the refused knights. They told him that his daughter had been seen several evenings walking with a young man in the park of the castle. Sir Jorgen would not believe them, but they assured him that they spoke the truth and offered to accompany him to the place that he might see for himself. The next evening as soon as the sun had set, the lord and the three knights stole into the park. By the light of the moon the lord saw his daughter walking with a young man, whom he recognized as one of the servants. The poor swain was caught, and the next day beheaded in front of the castle below the window where the cruel father held his daughter that she might see what was going on. But she saw nothing; she had swooned. Three days afterwards there was held a great feast in the castle, and there was to be dancing in the evening. Sir Jorgen and his daughter had a long interview just before the ball took place. The servants heard her say as she left him, 'I'm ready, father, I shall do as you wish.' Soon after, she was with the other girls—paler than the white dress she wore. One of the three knights approached her and invited her for a dance. She took his arm and danced so rapidly that her feet hardly touched the floor. As soon as the first knight was tired the second took his place, and then the third, and thus they continued all through the night. Christine's face was pale as death, but a smile half scornful, half joyful, hovered about her mouth. Sir Jorgen stood by a window and looked on. Nothing in his face betrayed his thoughts. The guests departed at the approach of morning. Christine stood by the same window from which she had been compelled to watch her lover's death. Her father took her hand and led her away. 'You shall not dance any more,' said he. 'No, I think not,' she answered. A stream of blood rushed from her mouth and she fell, lifeless. People relate that the blood-spots could yet be seen upon the floor, before the castle was burned, which happened about four hundred years afterwards."

CHRISTIANE PETERSEN,
Box 58, Lancaster, Kan.

The next cousin has a bit of history for us, to follow the pretty tradition above:

"Wherever the story of America's independence is read, the reader peruses the tragic tale of what was once a second Eden. About two miles from Parkersburg, Va., in the Ohio river lies Blennerhassett Island, one of the most beautiful spots in the broad expanse of the Ohio, and interesting because of its historic associations. To many, its brief history as connected with our country, is well known, yet some slight sketch of it may not be amiss here. It was in

BLENNERHASSETT.

the spring of 1805, that Aaron Burr, on his way down the Ohio in an open boat, discovered this pleasant retreat, then the home of Herman Blennerhassett and his beautiful young wife. A paradise of beauty, domestic peace and happiness was it when Burr's foot first trod its shores; he left it with that peace and happiness forever blighted. Led on by the seductive promises held out by Burr, Mrs. Blennerhassett induced her husband to risk his all in a traitorous conspiracy against the government. He lost. His beautiful island home was forfeited, and its owner died at last in utter poverty, with the stain of traitor resting upon his name. No sign of the sorrow that has visited it is present here now, however. Of all the places in the world where nature speaks to the heart contentment and peace, this is one. A grove is approached from the river, and presents a seemingly impenetrable forest of lofty trees. Passing upward from the gravel-strewn beach we leave the sunlight behind us save as it gravely flickers through the trees, and pass into the centre of the island. In many places miniature streams pass rippling at our feet. Near the middle of the island is the old well, renowned for its cool, deep waters, and called the old Blennerhassett well. Standing on the gentle swell of some tiny knoll, we catch a glimpse of the silvery waters of the Ohio as it ripples on its way. Sweet songsters overhead make the air musical with their melody, and our thoughts go back to the gifted mind and generous Irish heart that was once the possessor of all this beauty, but who in an evil hour yielded to the voice of the tempter and fell. Not alone in America is this spot associated with our country's history. In the great art galleries of the Louvre, Paris, there hangs to-day a picture entitled 'Sunset on Blennerhasset Island;' so in one of the most famous collections of art the world contains this historic spot of America is represented."

GRACE L. ENRIGHT, 555 Sixth St.,
Parkersburg, W. Va.

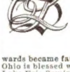
And going on in a historical vein, the next cousin has made out a list which you might well cut out and keep. He says:

"I suppose all the cousins know where our departed Presidents lie, at least they should know. They all sleep with honors in their native States, except three. Washington's honored remains lie in a marble coffin in the vestibule of the vault at Mt. Vernon. His tomb is overshadowed by a willow which was a clipping from a tree that overhung the grave of Napoleon at St. Helena. John Adams and his son John Quincy, lie side by side in leaden caskets, in cases hewn from solid stone, in a vault under the Unitarian church at Quincy, Mass. Thomas Jefferson rests in a rural cemetery in Albemarle County, Virginia. A plain granite shaft nine feet high marks the spot. James Madison lies within a small lot enclosed by a brick wall in a large field on his estate at Montpelier. He was the last survivor of the signers of the United States Constitution. James Munroe was buried at the Marble Cemetery, New York City, and after twenty-seven years of peaceful slumber was removed to Virginia. Andrew Jackson lies in a tomb made of limestone within his garden at the Hermitage. Martin Van Buren sleeps near his old home at Kinderbrook, N. Y. A plain granite shaft marks the spot. William Henry Harrison was borne from the national capitol to his final resting place at North Bend, Ohio. He was a Virginian by birth. John Tyler rests in an unmarked grave at Hollywood, near Monroe. James K. Polk was buried in the family cemetery at Nashville, Tenn. A monument twelve feet square, with Doric columns, has been raised to his memory. Although he has been dead forty-five years, nothing in his library has been changed; his hat, gloves and cane lie where he laid them when he came home for the last time. The book he was reading lies open on the table with the paper of the day beside it. He was a native of North Carolina. Zachary Taylor was entombed at Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville, Ky. He was also a native of Virginia. Millard Filmore rests in Forest Lawn Cemetery, three miles from Buffalo, N. Y. An obelisk of Scotch granite guards his final resting place on earth. Franklin Pierce's grave is at Concord, N. H. It has a marble monument. James Buchanan lies in a vault at Woodland Hill Cemetery, in Lancaster, Pa. A plain block of pure Italian marble is his monument. Abraham Lincoln found rest, when his noble life came to such an untimely end, in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Ill. He has a fine monument of bronze, marble and granite, bearing the single word 'Lincoln.' Andrew Johnson selected the site for his grave himself. It is half a mile from Greenville, Tenn., and known by a marble monument. James A. Garfield was buried at Cleveland, Ohio. U. S. Grant was borne to his last resting place at Riverside Park, New York, where his tomb overlooks the beautiful Hudson."

BOB SCOTT RUNNION, Walnut Run, N. C.

I had a great many other first-class letters this month to which I wanted to award cash prizes, but it was simply impossible, and so I hope the writers will be content with their pretty monograms and use them to adorn their note paper. You know they are very much used by fashionable people now.

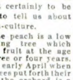
"Early in this century there was growing up among the Massachusetts hills, a plain looking country girl with a quick, strong intellect, an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, and a will to acquire it. By her own efforts Mary Lyon attended a seminary for girls. Later she taught with great success. But her mind was filled with an ever-increasing desire to establish a seminary for women where the terms should be so low that New England's daughters might all have its advantages. This she never gave up, and a building was finally erected and opened in South Hadley, in 1837, and afterwards became famous as the Mt. Holyoke seminary. Ohio is blessed with two Holyoke daughter schools. Lake Erie Seminary at Painsville, has been presided over from its beginning in 1854 by a succession of Mt. Holyoke girls. The Western Female Seminary, near Oxford, O., in sight of Miami University, was founded in 1855. Nearly six hundred young women have been graduated from this school and gone out to different fields of labor. Mt. Holyoke has other daughter institutions too numerous to mention. In Oroomiah, Persia, where but one woman in a thousand could read, Fidelia Fiske entered upon such a work in 1843. Marsovan and Bitlis, Turkey, have for thirty years had similar schools. The Huguenot Seminary in Cape Colony is a light to the benighted women of South Africa. In Spain, in Japan and other mission countries are kindred institutions doing an inestimable work for the world. D. L. Moody's Seminary in California, Michigan Seminary in Kalamazoo, Wellesley College, Albert Lea and still others are essentially Holyoke schools. Mary Lyon rests, but her works do truly follow her."



CANDACE L. SMITH, 800 N. 4th St., Steubenville, O.

A Delaware cousin ought certainly to be able to tell us about peach-culture.

"The peach is a low growing tree which bears fruit at the age of three or four years. From early April when the trees put forth their buds, the orchard is a thing of beauty. For a mile one can look on an unbroken stretch of pink, until it seems that the grass is indeed 'green with envy.' Next the leaves appear, and after them the wee green peach, which in turn matures into the marketable article. They are picked carefully by hand, excepting the ones on the tops of the trees. These are taken off with a 'plucker'—a long pole with a wire hand-shaped object at the top, below which is a basket to receive the peach. Great care must be taken with them, for should one be ever so slightly bruised, it would decay before reaching the market. After being picked, they are culled, first and second quality—and the rest, many of which are only bruised, are fed to the pigs. Some farmers put the second quality into the bottom of the basket and 'top off,' but the buyers soon find him out and will not take his fruit. On account of the mild spring this year, the buds opened early. After this there came a frost, doing great damage, and there will not be more than one-eighth of a crop. In an almost exclusively fruit section as is this, a shortage means many privations and of course affects all business."



MARY E. HARGADINE, Felton, Del.

And here is another cousin with something to say on raisin culture.

"Raisin culture is extensively carried on in this fertile valley of Southern California. The first work necessary in preparation for the next season's crop is the pruning of the vines, which is done as soon as the leaves are fallen. In trimming the vine, care is taken to leave eight stubs with two buds on each, for the new growth. After the first rain, usually in January, the cultivator is used to loosen the ground thoroughly. This operation is performed at least

twice a month until June 1. When the vines are putting out their branches 'succoring'—that is, taking off surplus branches below those that are to carry the berries—is performed. Sometimes they are succored twice in a season, in order to put all the growth in the bearing limbs. In May, when the vines have attained a growth of two or three feet, some ranchers 'summer prune'—cut off four inches of the longest branches, thereby putting more strength into the grapes. In May and June the bloom sets on the fruit. After the cultivation is completed the 'smoocher' is run through the vineyard to cut the weeds and smooth the ground, thus ending the work until the first week in September, when the trays, 2x3 feet, are put in between the vines to be filled with grapes. A hand barrow on which are two piles of trays, is used; one tray is for first grades and the other for second grades. Twelve days after picking the grapes are turned by a simple process—a tray is laid on top of a tray of grapes and then two men take each an end of the tray and turn them over. In ten days more the grapes are dry enough to sort by putting those nearly cured by themselves and leaving the others to be dried more. When thoroughly cured they are put into 'sweat boxes,' to go through a moistening process. The finest are then packed as California Layers No. 1. The others are usually put through a machine which stems, cleans and grades them into boxes, and are known as 4, 3, 2 and 1 Crown, the finest commencing with the greater number. An acre of vines will produce about 1,000 to 1,200 pounds of raisins."

CHARLES EDWARD MAXWELL,
Poway, San Diego Co., California.

A Southern cousin asks our attention next.

"Augusta, Ga., was named after one of the daughters of George the Fourth, and has always conducted herself as becoming her queenly title and to-day sits enthroned, Queen of the Savannah Valley. When our great grandfathers were boys, Augusta was an Indian trading village, the site of many a brave's tepee, and hunter's and trapper's lodges. The first settlers and founders of Augusta showed wisdom in selecting the present site to build their log cabins, for the land was fertile and peculiarly adapted to the best natural advantages. The visit of George Washington to Augusta was a signal honor which all Augustans guard, and the memory of which is held sacredly and transmitted from father to son. The house in which he had headquarters is here now. Through the portals of its great hall door entered tne noblest type of American manhood, the great and chivalrous 'Father of his Country.' Augusta is pleasantly situated on the southern bank of the Savannah river. Savannah is an Indian name, (accented by them on the first syllable)."

PATRICK JOSEPH MCLAUGHLIN,
445 Hale St., Augusta, Ga.

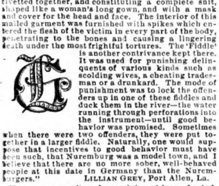
A long letter about Nuremburg, Germany, says:

"There is kept there a famous instrument of torture, which serves to show the horrible barbarities practiced as punishments in olden days. It is that terrible invention of Satan the 'Jung-Frau' (young wife) consisting of a metal case formed of plates rivetted together, and constituting a complete suit, shaped like a woman's long gown, and with a mask and cover for the head and face. The interior of this mailed garment was furnished with spikes which entered the flesh of the victim in every part of the body, penetrating to the bones and causing a lingering death under the most frightful tortures. The 'Fiddle' is another contrivance kept there. It was used for punishing delinquents of various kinds such as scolding wives, a cheating tradesman or a drunkard. The mode of punishment was to lock the offenders up in one of these fiddles and duck them in the river—the water running through perforations into the instrument—until good behavior was promised. Sometimes when there were two offenders, they were put together in a larger fiddle. Naturally, one would suppose that incentives to good behavior must have been such, that Nuremburg was a model town, and I believe that there are no more sober, well-behaved people at this date in Germany than the Nuremburgers."

LILLIAN GREY, Port Allen, La.

Here comes a writer of a reminiscent turn of mind. Perhaps we shall all like to read what he says:

"I sometimes wonder what have become of all those boys and girls that used to play on the green sward in front of our quaint old schoolhouse? Doubtless many of them repose beneath the willows in



the village cemetery, while others sleep beneath the pines where a soldier's hand hath placed them. Did you ever dream of your boyhood days, or allow your your thoughts to wander back into the realms of the past? It was my privilege to do so last night, and many of the incidents of my childhood and boyhood were repainted on the canvas of memory. Silver threads have taken the place of flaxen locks and eyes dim with the work of many years gaze wearily now on the pages of the past. We have passed far up life's hill and stand to-day at a point on our journey where milestones cast their shadows towards the east, and while with one hand we are strenuously clutching at the fleeing memories of the past, with the other we are reaching out for fancied pleasures in the future. But let us turn over this 'Dream picture' and see what is painted on the other side. Ah! there on one corner of the canvas we see the old farmers of the valley wending their way through fields of golden grain, and there a barefooted boy kicks up the dust in the road as he follows the cows to the clover fields. In another corner the dark outlines of a primitive church appear among the oaks, and up along the pathway come throngs of orderly people to listen to the holy words of 'Father' Blank. Still again, in another corner, we view a blossoming orchard among whose billows of pink and white the bee is revelling in the sweets of nature's pure nectar cup. Beneath these overhanging blossoms a maiden fair, sits pensive, sad and silent. Furtively she gazes about among the fragrant trees, and seems impatient in her solitude—but waits not long—you know the rest. Now in the centre of this beautiful 'Dream picture' there stands a lovely maiden—just crowned with orange blossoms, and at her side the noble friend of my boyhood days. Well! how silly and yet how dear are these dream pictures of the past. The busy man of the world may curl his proud lips and call it 'bosh' and thus display the littleness of his soul. I am a busy man, yet at evening's twilight hour or in the still night-time memories of my boyhood days will steal upon me like the falling dew."

JAMES MCCAULEY, Ione, Amador Co., Cal.

"The Chinese have been noted as farmers," says another, "for more than four thousand years. The Festival of Spring Plowing is a great event. At this time his majesty 'The Son of Heaven,' after fasting and praying in the temple of heaven, makes sacrifices to the god of agriculture. He comes from the Hall of Intense Thought, out into the fields and puts his royal long finger-nailed hands upon the rude plow painted for the occasion with yellow. Princes of the royal blood assist him, while the water-buffalo drags the rude machine through nine furrows, and couriers are sent forth to let the farmers know spring has begun. Every official in China is called upon to be a farmer. The water-buffalo, an ungainly species of the cow genus, is the chief animal of China. At the opening of spring, a life-sized paper buffalo is carried on a table, in a grand procession with bands of music. A day or two later and millions of people are hard at work. The plow consists of a beam handle and a share with wooden stem, which was fastened to a sort of rest at the back. In some cases they are tipped with iron. They make furrows more than six inches deep and cost two dollars. The work clothes of the farmers consist of a hat and waist cloth which comes as far down as the knees. In the most poverty stricken districts women draw the plow." ALICE M. KEMP, Buckland, Mass.

"Two miles north of my home is situated the village of White Post. Its name is from a white post in the middle of the town, where the roads cross, but there is more importance attached to this post than merely to furnish a name for the village. It was placed there by Lord Fairfax as a guide to his home, Greenway Court, one mile due south. The original stump remains, but is kept boxed up and painted. Here at Greenway Court George Washington made his home when he was a surveyor—and on a part of the old Greenway tract is a well said to have been dug by Braddock's men. 'Saratoga,' the home of Gen. Morgan of Revolutionary fame, is in this country; and here too are the homes of the well-known author, John Esten Cooke, 'The Briars,' and the renowned musician, Leo P. Wheat. Clarke County has many handsome old residences of colonial architecture, and Virginia with its green pastures and busy waters cannot boast of a prettier and more fertile county."

CLARA BOWEN, Stone Bridge, Clarke Co., Va.

Here is an extract from a San Francisco letter:

"The State Mining Bureau in this city contains some interesting relics. Among them are an umbrella owned by Benjamin Franklin, a grape shot and musket ball found on Washington's first battle ground at Fort Necessity, the scapula, jawbone and tusks of a mammoth; a piece of the old Charter Oak at Hartford, Conn.; a copy of Sidropbel's Almanac, for 1785; a United States Patent written on parchment, signed by James Monroe, President, and dated August 5, 1818. A parchment is the skin of a sheep or goat. There are also a great variety of Currency, some of the oldest being as follows: Maryland Currency, value $8 and dated 1767. Colonial Currency of New Jersey issued March 25, 1776. There are the 'The Daily Advertiser' printed in New Jersey, Jan. 21, 1791; Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, printed Nov. 23, 1798; and 'The Democratic Press' printed Sept. 2, 1813, were published in Philadelphia, and the Ulster County Gazette, printed at Kingston, N. Y., Jan. 4, 1800, telling about the death of Washington."

MAY ADAMS, 1127 1-2, Stevenson St.,
San Francisco, Cal.

"Mercersburg, Pa., is an old town and was the birthplace of James Buchanan, the fifteenth President of the United States. He was born in 1791 and died in 1868. The house in which he was born stood some distance up the mountain and was a small log one. It has been moved into the town and stands on one of the back streets. It is still occupied, although more than one hundred years old. Buchanan's mother, when he was a small boy, used to put a bell around his neck so that when he was at play on the mountain she could tell where he was."

AILIE M. SMITH, Box 111, Mercersburg,
Franklin Co., Pa.

Among others whom I have no room for are: Cassie McDonald, Blackville, N. C.; John J. Berry, Apalachicola, Fla.; A. G. Walter, Enfield, Ill.; Maggie Sanders, Natchez, Miss.: Arthur P. Roberts, Salem, Mass.; I. H. Halsey, Durant, Miss.; Alvin E. Boyd, Vawineckle, Pa.; Wm. D. Hibler, Oakdale, Neb.; Ida Trafton, Herman, Neb.; Mary L. Miller, San Angelo, Tex.; Love Duke, Rockville, Ala.; Zulah P. Williams, Omer, Oklahoma; L. D. Wykoff, Pinney's Corners, Pa.; Ella A. Smith, Palestine, Tex.; Henry A. Wise, Nandua, Va.; Nelly Holder, Grass Valley, Ore.; P. S. Heck, Riverville, W. Va.; Lula M. Carrick, Seat Pleasant, Md.; R. Winston, Quincy, Ill.; Rachel A. Stahnaker, Progress, W. Va.; C. M. W., Ronceverte, W. Va.; Nancy Lehman, Big Lake, P. O. Ont.; Miss Mary E. Bethell, Pinellas, Fla.; Lucy Wilbur, Prattsville, N. Y.; Viola M. Goff, Wheeling, W. Va.; Ira Reely, Baltimore, Md.; Max Pereles, Milwaukee, Wis.; H. B. Locey, Goods, S. D.; H. Charles Trask, Little Falls, N. Y.; Carl F. Horn, St. Joseph, Mo.; E. J Smith, Rockwood, Tenn.; Thos. W. Phillips, Buenna, Wash.; Irene W. Caine, Roseland, Fla.; John R. Benson, Mt. Morris. Mich.; L. Retlaw Bell, Walnut Grove, Ala.

But don't be discouraged; write again, all of you.

AUNT MINERVA.

A Plea for the Cockroach.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY L. O. HOWARD, (Editor of Insect Life.)

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DID you ever make the personal acquaintance of a cockroach? Not one of those big, black, ugly fellows found in damp cellars and kitchens, but one of the lively little brown German cockroaches, or "Croton bugs," as they are called in New York and thereabouts.

I do not deny that even this active little roach may become a great nuisance when he is allowed to take undisputed possession of a house, but when kept within bounds there is a great deal in his character that is admirable. He is intelligent and docile, he has a hopeful disposition, he is persevering to the last degree and he is cleanly in his habits. It is true that he is a trifle vain about his personal appearance and spends too much time over his toilet, and that he has too little regard for other people's rights over their own property; but, though his good points do not perhaps outweigh his bad ones, he is not the unmitigated rascal he is generally considered to be. People have in fact been unjust to the poor little chap; they have never stopped to think that he might have redeeming qualities; they have condemned him unheard.

But people are often unjust and far too often form hasty opinions. What a pity that all are not like Mr. Gilbert's policeman who realized that even the "enterprising burglar" has his innocent and harmless moments when he "loves to lie a-basking in the sun!"

In the first place our little cockroach is intelligent, and, further, he has a great turn for original investigation. It may be that it would be a stretch of the imagination to say that he is indulging in a taste for literature when he makes his supper on the paste in a cloth book-binding, or that when he eats the face from a photograph he does it in order to see what kind of glue is used in mounting it, or that when he makes his breakfast on shoe-blacking, his dinner on potato peel and his luncheon on wall-paper, he is simply trying physiological experiments on himself in the interests of science. Nevertheless he knows what is good for him and he takes care of himself beautifully. And he has a hard fight for life. He is like Ishmael—every man's hand is against him. Upon his intense activity and upon his skill in avoiding danger depend his very existence; and the fact that he does continue to exist in houses where he isn't wanted and where he is fought in every way possible marks him as what naturalists would call "a high and persistent type."

In the second place he is docile. The croton bug can be tamed and trained. Put a few into a glass-covered box and try it yourself. You will find that they will soon grow accustomed to your presence and that before long they will even come and lap a drop of water from your finger. So civilized do they become when treated kindly that they will even adopt some of the bad habits of civilized people. A scientific friend once showed me his own pet cockroach. The old gentleman would write with a cigar in his mouth until he had to look into his microscope, when he would lay his cigar down at a particular spot on the drawer of his table. Immediately a little croton bug would run out and begin to nibble at the moist end of the cigar and would seem sorry to stop when the old gentleman would begin to write again about what he had seen in his microscope and took up his cigar once more. This was a customary thing and this poor cockroach had really contracted the unwholesome tobacco habit. There was this to be said in his favor however, he would run at the sight of a cigarette! I saw this with my own eyes, so it is true.

This scientific individual however told me a story the same day which I cannot vouch for. He said that he knew a beautiful young lady who, every day, when she fixed her hair before her glass, used to notice a little cockroach on her dressing table, standing erect and watching her every movement in an admiring way. He always came when she was there and she finally made up her mind that he had fallen in love with her. His silent admiration lasted for some months and finally she was cruel enough to go and get married, and the next day the poor little roach was found dead on the table. In despair he had committed suicide by eating pearl powder!

The croton bug is cleanly. It is true that we often find him in dirty places about the house; but that is not his fault. It is ours. We should not have such places in our houses. Left to his own clean instincts he is as particular about his person as a cat. We all know how a cat licks her paws and washes her face, and how she smooths her fur down and how she objects to have it rumpled up. The little cockroach is just like her. He will not have even a particle of dust on his back if he can help it. He draws his legs and antennæ through his mouth and washes them clean whenever he stops in a safe place; and he passes his moistened hind legs over his wings and back until they fairly shine. No! No one has a right to find any fault with him in this direction.

It is said that in China the natives train cockroaches to fight with one another. If this be true, it is simply another instance in which the naturally good instincts of the insect have been perverted by man, for the cockroach is not naturally a fighter. I have seen them caress one another with their antennæ and have always considered them as most peaceful and friendly among themselves. They will eat up their dead relatives, but that, after all, is the quickest way to get rid of them. They never bite each other when alive however, and I very much doubt whether (in cockroach language) a cross word is ever passed between two of them.

And then the cockroach mothers are good to their children. With infinite trouble they carry their heavy egg-cases around with them to guard them from all harm, and they always manage to finally place them in some spot where there will be plenty of food for the young. These exhibitions of the strength of motherly love however are so common throughout the whole animal kingdom that this point need not be especially urged in favor of the croton bug.

But there is just one more point that might be made and that is that this little German roach has a lot of first cousins in the shape of the little tree cockroaches of the south, which live up in the tree tops and fly like birds and feed upon lichens and dead bark. They are as harmless as butterflies—less so in fact—and as inoffensive as spring lambs; and we all know how pleasant it is when we suspect that people do not estimate us at our full value, to be able to talk about what extremely superior people our first cousins are.

It has always been a puzzle to know how, when or why these industrious little fellows leave an old house for a new one, and this I have just discovered.

On a very dark rainy day in September a man came to me and said that a whole army of cockroaches was crossing the street some blocks away. I put on my hat and hurried to the spot and there saw a most wonderful sight. From the back of a restaurant on D street (Washington, D. C.) these little croton bugs were coming out by thousands. They crossed the sidewalk and gutter and the muddy road directly towards the building opposite. Pools of water obstructed their way, but neither these nor rubbish piles nor mud could stop them. They scrambled along in a bee line to the south and in an army ten feet wide, falling over one another in their haste, and invaded the opposite building.

This was a machine shop and the men left their work and with brooms attempted to repel the army by sweeping them out as fast as they entered the door. But the roaches were too active and too numerous and although the men swept until their arms were tired, hundreds darted through the line and thousands more continued to come, so that the brooms were finally laid aside and another defense was tried. At the suggestion of the foreman of the shop, a line of hot ashes was then laid along the brick sidewalk in front of the door. On reaching this barrier a few of the foremost singed their feelers and legs in an effort to pass over it, but the main army soon divided to either side and scurried away into cracks in the nearest buildings and down into area ways, seeking darkness as soon as possible. The stream continued for nearly two hours.

Now what did this mean? I went to the restaurant and found that they were not cleaning house and that they were not making any effort to rid the place of roaches. I then examined the insects themselves and found that nearly all of them were females carrying egg-cases, and thus the mystery was explained. The wonderful mother's instinct had forewarned them that there would not be food enough in the old home to support so many young as were about to be born, so they sallied forth like a swarm of bees in search for new and more commodious quarters. I said, you will remember, that it was a very dark and rainy day, and this, with the fact that no one has ever written about such a thing before, makes me think that these marches must usually take place at night.

In closing, let me urge you not to take what I have written too much to heart. Do not sympathize with the croton bugs so much as to allow them to run at will about your house, for they have not the quality of gratitude and will become great nuisances if you give them the slightest encouragement. Keep plenty of insect powder on hand and when you use it quiet your conscience with the reflection that an insect powder death is an easy one to die.

SUPPOSE you have all guessed long ago that charade in the last number of COMFORT which I gave you. One of our readers kindly sent it in for you, and I presume most of you have made out the cross word to be "Comfort." Another kind reader who is an old man sixty-three years old, has been reading our talks, and is interested enough in them to write something which he once saw.

You remember the story I told you, about strange fishes in the James river? Dr. William Boardman, of Gordon, Nebraska, says that he has caught eels traveling through grass in the spring when they were going from one pond to another.

When he was a boy in England about twelve years old, there were some ponds near him about twelve rods apart; the grass grew about two or three inches high, and when the dew was very heavy, or sometimes, perhaps, when it rained they were seen in the grass.

The curious part was that they always went out from the same pond, but never out of others back again to that one. Sometimes the boys, when a heavy dew was expected, would say, "Let us go eeling this morning." They would go out and follow the trail in the wet grass, and generally would get one or two eels. Sometimes the trail would go a few yards and then return to the pond, as if they had got discouraged and turned back.

Now I am going to tell you about some of the animals that lived in America long before men lived here. Some of you will remember in our talk last summer about the Peabody Museum, connected with Harvard College, that I told you of seeing some of the monstrous great skeletons of fishes and animals that lived in pre-historic times.

Do you know what pre-historic means?

It means anything that happened or lived before there was any history; that is, before people lived on earth, and anything was at all told in row.

Scientific men have studied into the subject of the animals that lived here in those times, and they have found sometimes enormous bones which have been found imbedded in rock or clay, which have lain there for unknown ages. And these men, who have studied the science of comparative anatomy—which you will learn all about when you are bigger—are able from these to reconstruct the forms of these long-forgotten animals.

What do you suppose we call the men who do this?

Paleontologists.

It is a big word, isn't it?

You know if we find the skeleton of an animal with horns like a deer or an ox, we may be sure it never had claws like a cat. If we find the jaw of an animal like a cat, we know that it had claws and not hoofs. And following out such reasoning as this, these men have made a pretty sure description of the pre-historic creatures which lived in this world before men did. The most ungainly of these was called the Mosasaurus. It was a tremendous lizard or sea-serpent. He was by no means the largest of his kind, but he measured eighty feet in length.

THE MOSASAURUS.

They live on the land a part of the time, and also in the sea, and their bones have been found from the Gulf of Mexico up as far as Lake Superior. He probably lived on creatures nearly as large as himself. He had rows of conical teeth, which no doubt were pretty serviceable in catching and holding his prey; and he had an elastic neck like a snake. As he was built very much like a snake with a flattened tail, he could travel in the water with his four flattened paddles very fast, and could also wade in the shallows and catch the prey there. Our artist has made him stand on his tail; so you must turn the paper around to look at him.

Then they had in those times an enormous reptile that left behind him three-toed tracks. He was called a "Dinosaur." Some of these were thirty feet long, and some were even sixty feet. They were a sort of lizard which lived upon vegetation and trees.

One of the most dreadful looking things that lived in those times, was a creature called the "Stegosaurus," that was thirty feet long and lived both in the water and out of it. It fed on the tops of trees. It could move its four legs freely in every direction as a man moves his arms. And it used to sit up on its two hind limbs and monstrous tail and with its fore-legs brought down the tops of the tallest trees to get its dinner. You see by this picture what a beautiful creature he was, with all those scalloped arrangements up and down his back that furnished a ruffle which any lady might be proud to wear. The spines on its tail, however, were not very pretty for any creature that got into a fight with him. The strangest thing about this animal, and one which he shares it different from any creature which has lived before or since, is the fact that he had two sets of brains, one in his skull like other folks, and the other somewhere down in his haunches, which he probably used to direct the operations of that queer-looking tail and hind legs. Probably if the rest of us were thirty or forty feet long we might be able to use two sets of brains; and, in fact, I've seen people do it is, who I thought would not be injured by another set.

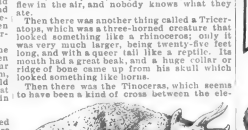
What should you think of an enormous great dragon flying around up in the air, twenty-five feet long? Then is the kind of a bird they had in the days long before Adam and Eve lived in

A GROUP OF PTERODACTYLS.

the garden of Eden, and Cain killed Abel. They were called Pterodactyls, and horrible creatures they were too. I think we should not like to be frightened to see such a thing flying down into our front yards, for instance. But there is one comfort to be had; there are no such creatures living now, as the Pterodactyls died out centuries ago. Nobody has yet been able to make up his mind whether they were birds, beasts, or reptiles, only that they probably flew in the air, and nobody knows what they ate.

Then there was another thing called a Triceratops, which was a three-horned creature that looked something like a rhinoceros; only it was very much larger, being twenty-five feet long, and with a queer tail like a reptile. Its mouth had a great beak, and a huge ridge or lidge of bone came up from his skull which looked something like horns.

Then there was the Tinoceras, which seems to have been a kind of cross between the ele-

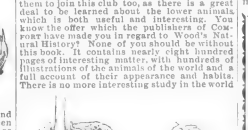


THE TRICERATOPS.

phant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus. He had his residence in the great woods, a Megatherium? He was only eighteen feet high, and weighed six tons, and used to stand up on his hind legs and eat the leaves and the tops of the trees or among the branches. He was a kind of a sloth. You remember I described sloth in your books of Natural History which some of you have got through the kindness of the publishers of COMFORT; but instead of climbing the trees to eat the foliage as the modern sloth does, this great creature stood up like a monstrous kangaroo and pulled the tree-top down where he could eat to his heart's content.

Then if you were not contented with meeting a Megatherium, you could meet a Glyptodon, which looked like a turtle only it was nine feet long. It is from these animals that the armadillos, of which you can read in your Wood's Natural History, have descended.

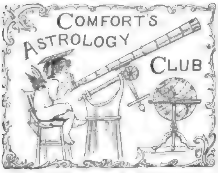
You all remember that some months ago we formed a Natural History Club to which we were all going to belong. Since then, however, a good many children have become readers of the COMFORT, and we cordially invite all of them to join this club too, as there is a great deal to be learned about the lower animals which is both useful and interesting. You know the offer which the publishers of COMFORT have made you in regard to Wood's Natural History? None of you should be without this book. It contains nearly eight hundred pages of interesting matter, with hundreds of illustrations of the animals of the world and a full account of their appearance and habits. There is no more interesting study in the world



MEGATHERIUM EATING DINNER.

than Natural History, and here is a chance for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12.)



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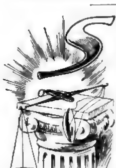
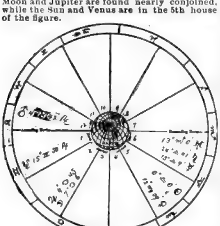


SEPTEMBER presents Celestial Phenomena of more than ordinary consequence. Besides the ingress of the Sun into Libra, which opens the Autumn, there occurs a partial eclipse of the Moon on the 14th and a total eclipse of the Sun on the 29th. Mars and Neptune both become stationary this month; and Venus makes her perihelion passage on the 17th. These, with other phenomena, Astrologers consider with reference to their effects upon the earth and its inhabitants. We begin with the Sun's entry into the sign Libra for our deductions for the Autumn Quarter.

The Sun reaches the first minute of Libra at about 19 minutes past 8 P.M., the 22nd of September, Washington Mean Time. The Sun thus crossing the Equator from North to South marks the Autumnal Equinox. Experience teaches that some unusual disturbances to the earth's atmosphere is effected at the time of these annual equinoctial passages. By reason of the other phenomena occurring at about that time, look for some unusual atmospheric or electrical effects—probably high winds amounting to tornadoes or cyclones in places; also thunder, lightning and rains, especially the middle of the month.

The accompanying figure erected for the meridian of Washington, to the time indicated, presents the positions of the heavenly bodies and the firmament at that moment. Mars has just risen and stands retrograde in the 12th house opposite to the malefics Saturn and Herschel in the 6th house with Mercury. Neptune is near the cusp of the 2nd house in which the Moon and Jupiter are found nearly conjoined, while the Sun and Venus are in the 5th house of the figure.



The last degrees of Taurus are on the Ascending horizon and the early degrees of Aquarius are overhead on the south meridian. Taurus rising gives Venus dominion of the scheme. She is in Virgo in good aspect with Herschel, Jupiter, Mars and Moon. Being the significator of the people and so well conditioned, the Moon co-significator of the people also being so nearly conjoined with the great benefic Jupiter, would give most excellent promise of benefit and advantage to the masses of the people and harmony for all; but the square between the luminaries detracts from the measure of benevolence. Indications point to pleasant and healthy air, as a whole; fruitfulness of the earth, and good and wholesome fruit. They promise better harmony between the poorer and richer classes of earnest citizens. There will be increase of revenue replenishing the treasury to the detriment of the very wealthy interests of the country, which in some manner provokes bitter animosities and enmities towards the Chief Executive of the Country and the dominant administration. There will be some extraordinary shrinkages of money values in private interests and some disastrous failures in the commercial and monetary world during the fall and winter months, probably beginning in the latter days of September. The positions of the malefics indicate many secret plots and conspiracies among disorderly classes and from the socialist and anarchist; and point to the active use of prisons and places of confinement; also cautions the authorities against uprisings of criminals confined in such places.

The indications of the figure are not as promising as might be for children and younger members of the community, cautioning against diseases among them of a martial and epidemic character, such as measles, diphtheria, scarlet fever, low fevers, and abdominal troubles. And in general there will be increased prevalence of disease involving the urinary and generative organs, heart, and head or brain. Let all parents be watchful of early symptoms of martial diseases among their children, especially if they were born near the 25th of January or April, or the 28th of July or October, of past years.

A Partial Eclipse of the Moon. The Moon will pass into the shadow of the Earth and be partially eclipsed in the 23rd degree of the sign Pisces at about 13 minutes past 11 o'clock at night on the 14th of September, 1894. It will be visible at Washington and vicinity. The effects of eclipses fall upon those portions of the earth where they are most perfectly visible; or which are ruled by the sign in which the eclipse occurs; and those effects influence the multitude or the country as a whole than particular persons of private condition. This eclipse falls in the sign Pisces. An ancient writer says: "An eclipse in the watery triplicity, in which Pisces is classed, presignifies rumors of war, and corruptions and overflowing of the sea banks," also "harm to creatures living in the waters, and corruptions of rivers." The figure shows Jupiter just on the ascending horizon and inasmuch as he rules the sign in which the eclipse falls we apprehend that this country will not be injuriously affected but will be rather benefited in commerce. There may be and probably will be some serious failure of some large book-making concern and the time is evil for the literary world in matters of finance, also for schools and educational institutions. There may be some serious controversy or dispute over fisheries or seals, inasmuch as this eclipse falls in Pisces and the evil planets; are located in the northwest part of the figure, but diplomatic negotiations will be likely to result in permanent good to the country.

A Total Eclipse of the Sun occurs just after midnight in the morning of the 29th. It is not visible in this country. The Eclipse falls in the first decanate of the sign Libra, which according to the teachings on the subject, "corrupts the air and causes pestilence," and presignifies also injury to and scarcity of corn or grain. The principal effects, however, of this eclipse are to be looked for in Central Africa where there is likely to be warring and strife and some epidemic disease.

CELESTIAL CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER.

SEPTEMBER 1—Saturday. The morning is decidedly unpropitious for transaction of a speculative character and bids thee hold on to the purse-strings. The noon and afternoon hours are the best for general ventures.

2—Sunday. The forenoon is unusually benevolent, particularly inviting communion with the poet, musician, and artist, and giving special appreciation of the beautiful in religion, nature, and art; the latter part of the day increases depression and induces melancholy, and does not encourage association with the very aged.

3—Monday. Begin early and improve every moment of the forenoon, particularly for transactions pertaining to money matters or trade; but as the noon hour approaches and passes have care not to decide matters hastily nor become involved in controversy of any kind; be patient under excitement and not over-sensitive to mental hurts; the latter part of the day gives improved conditions again.

4—Tuesday. Let this day be improved for literary pursuits and engagements, choice being given to the forenoon for urging the most important matters, such as depend upon mental labor; prosecute mathematical and scientific studies, and let contracts affecting legal and educational matters be made; merchants and tradesmen are particularly favored; in the afternoon and evening refrain from pressing suit with the fair sex and discourage dealings in fancy goods or articles of dress or adornment; little real enjoyment need be expected from musical or dramatic entertainments or social gatherings.

5—Wednesday. An indifferent day, giving little promise of profit or advantage; push routine work and duties.

6—Thursday. Make no application to persons high in authority, for advantage or favor, particularly in the afternoon or evening.

7—Friday. Avoid litigation and all matters connected with deeds and writings in the morning, when also defer important correspondence and contract making. For dramatists, musicians, and artists this is an especially fortunate day during the middle hours, as it is for social entertainments and pleasure seeking; let all engaged in the polite arts improve every moment; purchase for use, not trade, all articles of dress, adornment, or decoration, also musical merchandise, dramatic appurtenances, artists' materials, etc.; unusual pleasure will be experienced from music, the drama, and all honorable amusements.

8—Saturday. Merchants should transact business cautiously during the early forenoon, and purchases for trade are best deferred for a season; the noon and afternoon are best for transacting business with chemists, surgeons, bakers, iron and brass workers and carpenters.

9—Sunday. Pastor's discourse is likely to contain many peculiar sentiments and radical ideas; the aged are pleasantly disposed; and the oddities and curiosities of life engage the thoughts.

10—Monday. Be stirring early and employ every waking moment, preference being given to literary matters and the prosecution of mathematical and scientific studies; the mind is unusually active and ideas clothe themselves more readily than usual; urge correspondence; make contracts, especially those affecting legal and educational matters; hire help and push all matters of trade and business; but have care as the evening approaches, when no hasty conclusions in business should be formed; litigation and contention are likely to interfere seriously with the happy outcome of affairs of magnitude or importance now begun; be not rash; scrutinize carefully all business enterprises; seek not promotion in public positions nor offend thine employer; crimes are likely to be increased as the night advances and explosions and fires are rendered more likely than usual.

11—Tuesday. An evil day in which matters of much importance are best deferred; see that the tongue or pen do no violence to good judgment; moral deformities are excited and the record of crimes is likely to be made fuller than usual; be very careful if near to machinery or electrical apparatus and in the use of firearms or fires.

12—Wednesday. A favorable day for agricultural matters and for having dealings with landlords, in houses or lands, mining properties, lumber, coal, or wool. The day, however, does not encourage the inauguration of new business pertaining to the mechanical pursuits or trades; surgical operations and chemical experiments are less likely to give satisfactory results.

13—Thursday. Choose the middle hours for surgical operations and for dealing with military men, druggists, glass manufacturers, and all engaged in ingenious and mechanical trades, but keep out from underground places; use the forenoon for replenishing thy stock of cutlery, hardware, machinery, and tools and implements to be used for manufacturing purposes; the hours are unusually favorable for the most important moves of the time and encourages purchases for trade and all honorable undertakings.

14—Friday. The early forenoon is best for general affairs, for as the day advances there begin some very mischievous conditions under which no new ventures should be begun; especially if they relate to literary matters or are of a commercial or speculative character.

15—Saturday. Evil continues. Be cautious as the day advances for deceit and treachery are abroad; sign no deeds or notes nor enter into any contract of importance; postpone all correspondence of much moment; bankers and merchants should scrutinize applications for credit and signatures to money writings; literary and educational interests suffer unusual detriment, and increased mortality and business embarrassments are likely among the *literati;* especially apparent in the lives of those in such callings, born on or about the 25th of March or December of past years.

16—Sunday. This day conduces to happy efforts of the clergy, giving unusual volubility, eloquence and zeal to the pulpit discourse.

17—Monday. The first half of this day is evil, and little prosperity is likely to attend new undertakings; particularly avoid the landlord and beware of making any contract with the laboring classes; the afternoon gives improved conditions, inviting vigorous activity in the principal affairs of life, especially to finances, commerce or trade.

18—Tuesday. Push business vigorously during the forenoon; avoid hasty decision and all excitement or contention in thy dealings; buy goods for trade, and have dealings with persons of means and prominence, and negotiations pertaining to artistic, musical, dramatic, and fancy wares and merchandise; also wearing apparel and articles of adornment, household furniture and decorations; let all engaged in the polite and elegant occupations specially improve this time; the decorative artist and landscape painter should lose no moment of this forenoon particularly if their work is executed with water colors; the afternoon and evening are especially unpromising for seeking preferment or any advantage or profit from public officials or persons high in authority in great corporations.

19—Wednesday. This day has but little to recommend it; be sure that all purchases are really needed, and loan no money nor speculate.

20—Thursday. The first two-thirds of this day are the best and all general business should be urged at this time; the late afternoon and evening hours are peculiarly unpropitious for the prosecution of business relating to fancy and ornamental goods and also the pursuit of the fine arts; musical, dramatic, or social entertainments do not give much permanent satisfaction.

21—Friday. Begin this day with its first hours, for the mental powers are active and the judgment likely to be more sound than usual; literary pursuits will be successfully prosecuted, business ventures now made prove fortunate, and humanity in general will be more benevolently inclined in the morning and evening which are really the better parts of the day; have dealings with landlords, real estate men, plumbers, builders, agriculturalists, and with all who are engaged in laborious avocations.

22—Saturday. Applications to public officers or those in authority will find but little favor during the forenoon; but as the noon is passed, let all energies be given to the prosecution of business; buy goods for trade and urge the mechanical pursuits; deal in machinery, especially such as pertains to the manufacture of woolen goods; have surgical operations performed in the late forenoon; let judges weigh testimony and decide important cases, and lawyers take ininiatory steps and urge proceedings in litigation of magnitude. This time is more fortunate than usual for persons born about the 23rd of February, 26th of June, 17th of August, or 26th of December, of past years, promising financial betterment, increased business advantages, and improved health.

23—Sunday. Not promising for a Sabbath day, inviting rest and quiet rather than physical exertion or mental efforts; depressing influences prevail in the latter part of the day, giving tendencies to hopelessness and despair in some lives, notably those born about the 14th of January, April, July, or October, of past years; for the majority of them have been under adverse influences for many weeks and have probably had many disorders of an unusual character; let all such take courage for they will have positive relief from the mischievous conditions very soon.

24—Monday. The middle hours of this day are the best, particularly for dealings with persons of prominence in the political world or those who occupy stations in public life or in charge of great public works or corporations; the evening presents exciteable conditions invoking patience for avoidance of controversies or disagreements; crimes and fires are increased in the next few hours, and explosions are to be specially guarded against.

25—Tuesday. Evil continues until noon, but thereafter very benevolent influences prevail covering the next 48 hours, which invite vigorous prosecution of all honorable transactions. REGULUS advises his friends to begin at noon the earnest pushing of their several callings, and especially those in the strictly intellectual pursuits in life. Indeed, the passing influences are among the best that are encountered in many days and should be improved for the inauguration of all principal ventures. Exception should be made at this time to merely speculative ventures unless the nativity is peculiarly fortunate. Preference should be given to this afternoon for commercial ventures; merchants, tradesmen, public writers, lawyers, judges, mathematicians, travelers, printers, and all engaged in the ingenious pursuits or employed with the pen are particularly favored unless born about the dates indicated in the suggestions for the 23rd instant, or about the 1st of March, 9th of April, 3rd of September, or 12th of October, of past years.

26—Wednesday. Begin with the dawn, for the day is of excellent promise; bright and prosperous are the conditions for the merchant and traveler, also for the beginning of great and honorable undertakings and for entering upon new ventures in the mechanical pursuits; deal in machinery—especially such as pertains to the manufacture of woolen goods—electrical apparatus, hardware and cutlery; make contracts and engagements with farmers, miners, plumbers, and contractors and builders; deal in metals and cattle; handle chemicals, and have dental work performed. The day is a superior one and REGULUS commends it as one of the best for nearly all the undertakings in life, and urges his friends to make beginnings in all important enterprises. If this be the anniversary of any birthday it gives a much improved season for success and welfare in life.

27—Thursday. Continue the efforts of yesterday with the utmost vigor, giving preference to business pertaining to the elegant and decorative in life; let all engaged in the polite arts improve every moment, urging and realizing from their several pursuits; purchase articles of dress, adornment, or decoration, also musical merchandise, dramatic appurtenances, artists' materials, etc.

28—Friday. Unusual circumspection is advised in all undertakings of this day; beware of speculation, as bad losses are threatened; some bad failures occur in business circles about this time, and fraud and defalcations of magnitude come to light. The day is peculiarly evil in a pecuniary sense, and it is really dangerous in point of health to persons born about January, 1802; April, 1822; July, 1844; August, 1866; or December, 1885; and such persons should exercise great care in all the affairs of their passing life.

29—Saturday. The injunction against speculation urged for yesterday is continued for to-day, otherwise the day is not specially conducive to success in any particular direction; but is detrimental to advancement of intellectual and literary pursuits.

30—Sunday. A Sabbath likely to be noted for unusual nervous excitement and feverish activity; strange peculiarities, irritability and restlessness will be common; the mind will incline towards the curious in science, art and mechanism; and ingenious, new, and unusual ideas are born and peculiar notions and whims provoke discord and controversy. The day is generally unfavorable for persons born about the 16th of January or April, or the 19th of July or October, of past years, for they are likely to be just now having some unusual mental anxieties, troubles through correspondence, writings or business controversies, and in some cases from malicious or slanderous report. REGULUS advises all to let special prudence rule their acts and moderation and deliberate judgment control the tongue; combustion is quickened and some bad fires and losses are probable in these days; increased mortality from apoplexy, paralysis, and heart disease, also from hemorrhage and violence is more than likely.

CHILDREN'S CIRCLE OF COMFORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11.)

any and all of you to become as well learned in this branch as though you had belonged to the higher classes of some academy for a long time. For if you read this book through carefully, and learn all that it contains there about the animals of the world, you will know all there is to know. Professor Wood was the greatest Natural Historian of his day, and has written it up in an interesting way which you will find easy to read and to remember. In fact, we have a great many letters from those who have got the book and read it, about its value and interest to all. Those of you who have not yet made an effort to get the book, will I hope, do so at once, and follow up all we have learned about natural history.

All you have to do, you know, is to get three subscribers to COMFORT, (your own will count one) and you will get a copy of the Wood's Natural History without a cent of expense to you. Or, if you can only get two, you can enclose ten cents when you send their names and addresses with their subscription money. Try and get one, all of you. UNCLE CHARLIE.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

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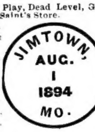
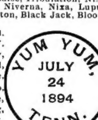
OF all the queer names of post-offices in this great country, it would be hard to tell which is the oddest. And their origin is often as queer as the names themselves. Here is a list, for instance, which is as unique as it is curious, arranged under a heading of their several States:

ARKANSAS. Coin, Esau, Gin, Grab, Ink, Jumbo, Negro Hill.
CALIFORNIA. Ben-Hur, Bogus, Paradise, Yankee Jim, You Bet, Yuba City.
IDAHO. Bonus, Bumpus, Chestnut, Fidelity, Fruit, Grubb, Jubilee, Saw-tooth, Triumph.
KANSAS. Crow, Fact, Happy, Harmony, Purity, Sugar.
ALABAMA. Axle, Ball Play, Dead Level, Get-up, Urbanity, Abel, Saint's Store.
COLORADO. Scissors Troublesome, Sugar Loaf, Wigwam.



DELAWARE. Blackbird, Mermaid, Red Lion, Rising Sun.
FLORIDA. Alligator Glory, Mary Esther.
ILLINOIS. Advance, Allright, Moonshine, Spankey, Tom.
KENTUCKY. Barefoot, Bee Lick, Easy Gap, Gimlet, Eve, Haystack, Tidal Wave, Rabbit Hash.
LOUISIANA. Cutoff, Dime, McGinty, Relief, Prohibition, Slaughter.
MARYLAND. Bishop's Head, Blue Ball, Chance, Pivot, Thrift.
MASSACHUSETTS. Teaticket.
MICHIGAN. Mikado, Roots, Waltz, Devil's Lake.
MINNESOTA. Vermillion, Red-wing.
MISSISSIPPI. Energy, Freetrade, Peelers, Yellow Rabbit, Saint's Rest.
MONTANA. Truly, Wisdom.

NEBRASKA. Looking Glass, Rescue, Stop.
NEVADA. Fair Play.
NEW JERSEY. Barley Sheaf.
NEW YORK. Catfish, Long Year, Reserve, Result, Shinhopple.
OHIO. Black Jack, Crab Apple, Jolly, Jump, Pulse, Africa.
OKLAHOMA. Hominy.
OREGON. Progress.
PENNSYLVANIA. Big Shanty, Good Intent, Husband, Muff, Panic.
SO. CAROLINA. Snipes, Thrifty.
INDIANA. "B," Desolation, Kickapoo, Solitude.
IOWA. Jericho, Muddy, Zero.
MISSOURI. Pulltight, Dutchtown, Dudenville, Jimtown, Drynob, Ebenezer, Lone Elm, Lone Jack, Lone Dell, Lone Oak, Lone Spring, Lone Star, Lone Tree, Prohibition, Rolling Home, Paradise, Tribulation, Nishnabotna, Cockrum, Niverna, Nixa, Lupua, Arnica, Job, Phlegeton, Black Jack, Blooming Rose.
TENNESSEE. "A. B. C.," Yum Yum, "Y. Z.," Let, Ai, Andy, Ben, Bob, Boy, Bud, Cute, Ego, Gabe, Gath, Ho, Ken, Loo, Nancy, Notime, Number One, Seg, Sill, Tang, Tut, Whig, Zach, Peanut.



ARIZONA. Big Bug, Bumble Bee, Tip Top.
MAINE. Number One, Razorville, Sabbathday Lake.
GEORGIA. Absalom, Adam, Cat Creek, Clinch, Crane-eater, Enigma, Red Belt.
NO. CAROLINA. Tariff, Bachelor, Maiden, Black Jack, Calico, Catfish, Fig, Gunpowder, Haystack, Hanging Dog, Hives, Negro Head.
TEXAS. Baby Head, Cat Spring, Cowboy, Ditto, Yuno.
VIRGINIA. St. Tammany's, Negro Arm, Negro Foot.

Sometime ago the residents of a new town in Missouri sent in their application for a post-office; the name they suggested was not satisfactory to the department for some reason.

"Select another name," wrote the Post-master-General. "Something not so common, something peculiar."

"All right," the applicants replied, "call it Peculiar." And the mail bag has gone to "Peculiar, Cass Co., Mo.," ever since.

Doubtless there are plenty more names throughout the country just as odd as the above.

HERE AND THERE.

It is estimated that England now owns about 1,400,000 square miles of territory in Africa.

On July 4th, the citizens of Hawaii formerly proclaimed the establishment of a republic.

A monument is to be erected in Chicago to the late Henry C. Work who wrote "Marching Through Georgia."

The house in which Martin Luther died at Eisleben, Germany, bore no mark to indicate this fact until a few weeks ago. The famous house, however, has now been repaired and restored in a worthy fashion. It contains many relics of the great reformer.

George M. Pullman the millionaire car builder, began his career as a laborer along the Erie Canal; Studebaker the millionaire wagon manufacturer "went west" with less than a dollar in his pocket, and U. S. Senator Gorman of Maryland rose from the humble position of a page in Congress.

ANCIENT OYSTERS.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

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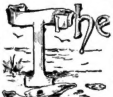

THE OYSTER-EATING epicure has come into the world too late. He should have lived several millions of years ago, when, instead of the five or six kinds of those bivalves now existing, there were scores of species. Where at present there are "half a dozen raw," there were then as many myriads. In fact, it was the Age of Oysters.

In those days what is now the State of Texas was under water, and a large part of its area was one great oyster-bed—probably the biggest oyster-bed that ever existed. A good deal may be told about it with certainty because the remains of it are still to be seen. In truth, the shells form a continuous sheet 20 feet thick and extending almost half way across the State. They have been transformed into a sort of limy rock, in which they are loosely cemented together.

The vast accumulations of oyster shells found on hill-tops in that part of the country were for a long time regarded as of mysterious and inexplicable origin. Various crude and even superstitious surmises were formed as to the agency which had gathered and put them in such places. But geology explains that there came an epoch when the great Texas bed of mollusks was uplifted out of the sea and became dry land. Then, of course, the oysters died. Streams cut away valleys, leaving hills with the shells on their summits.

Perhaps a more vivid notion of the vastness of this deposit of oyster shells will be given by the statement that, approximately speaking, it equals in bulk and thickness the coal seams of Pennsylvania. The bivalves which lie on the surface of the ground are gathered and burned for lime by people in Texas. They are also used for making roads. Some of them bear a strange resemblance to the upper part of the human cranium. Hence they are called by the natives "skulls."

Those of another species are of enormous size, the shells being as much as 5 inches thick and weighing 8 or 10 pounds a pair. But the animal that lived in this big house was small in proportion to the size of its dwelling—hardly larger, indeed, than the ordinary oyster of the restaurants to-day. On the other hand, there was a kind with a coiled shell which was the smallest of all known oysters, being only about an inch in length. One characteristic of these ancient bivalves seems to have been that they ran to shell and had little meat.

One very extraordinary species that lived in the Texas bed has been called the "cockscomb oyster," because of the peculiar shape of its shell. The latter is of beautiful form, with a toothed edge. This particular animal would appear to have been the hermit of its family, inasmuch as it is only occasionally that the remains of a single specimen are found. Seemingly it did not dwell in colonies, as all other kinds of oysters do and always have done. The seeker after curiosities thinks himself in luck when he comes across one of these toothed shells.

Some of these ancient oysters were much like those sold in the market to-day, but the great majority of them belonged to species which have been extinct for ages. One kind had a remarkable development like a beak above the hinge. It has been named the "gryphæa," from its fancied resemblance to a griffin. Another sort was shaped like a boat with upturned prow; of it there were numerous varieties. Yet another is formed in the likeness of a ram's horn. Specimens of this last are "weathered out" by millions from clay banks.

The griffins and cockscombs lived in much deeper water than the others, as is known from the fact that their shells are found in limestones and clays. Such deposits were not laid down in the shallows. All of the species were associated with forms of molluscan life which are unknown to-day except by remains preserved from a remote antiquity. Among these vanished creatures were huge "ammonites" with coiled shells, related to the modern nautilus. Of the same family was the "orthoceras," which had a house shaped like a straight horn, sometimes as much as 9 feet in length.

There were clams in those days also. One species was very peculiarly constructed, the two valves of its shell differing greatly in size. The right valve was a foot long, while the left one was only about as big as a silver dollar. Of course, the animal was very small. No housewife would have considered it an economical shellfish to buy. There were plenty of sea urchins then, as well as many kinds of single-shelled mollusks. Great banks of the latter yet remain in the region described. No lack of life was there in that remote epoch, when man was an animal as yet unthought of on the earth.

The oysters of that period had not him to fear as an enemy. But they were obliged to struggle for existence against numerous other foes. Many of their shells perforated with holes prove that they were preyed on by boring whelks like those which destroy them nowadays. They also suffered from the attacks of boring worms and five-fingered starfishes. Oddly enough, only one solitary fossil starfish has thus far been discovered in the Texas bed. But these five-fingered parasites have soft bodies, so that they would only be preserved under unusual and accidental conditions. Among the most destructive enemies of oysters then as now were fishes of the ray tribe, which had teeth arranged in stone-crusher fashion. Large numbers of these teeth are found among the shells.

Teeth are commonly preserved long after all other parts of the animals to which they belonged have decayed and disappeared. That is because the enamel that forms their outer coat is the hardest known substance of organic origin. Among the most extraordinary of the relics of a distant past are the sharks' teeth which are plowed up by farmers literally by thousands from the soil of Virginia and Maryland. Some of these are of astonishing bigness. Only the other day the writer saw and handled one which weighed 2 pounds. It was 6 inches long and 5 inches broad at the base. The color of its polished surface was a rich olive green. It was, in fact, a very beautiful object.

Now, there are sharks to-day which attain a length of 40 feet. The biggest tooth belonging to any one of them would not be longer than a man's little finger, and its weight would hardly exceed 3 or 4 ounces. One may then imagine what enormous creatures these ocean tyrants of long ago must have been. To suppose that they attained a length of 90 feet would be placing the estimate at a minimum. But the only remains which they have left behind to tell the story of their size and prowess are the teeth described. The enormous numbers in which the latter are found convey a notion of the multitudes of such ravening fishes which must have existed in those days.

These great sharks were contemporary with the oysters described. At that period there was very little dry land in the world, the greater part of this continent not having as yet emerged from the ocean. What are now the Rocky Mountains were then merely scattered islands. Animal life was chiefly represented by fishes, which may be said to have run creation. There were carnivorous whales—possibly it was a survivor of their kind that swallowed Jonah—and finny monsters clad in armor plates, of indescribable ferocity and of many species now happily extinct. Enormous reptiles swam in the seas. Some of them resembled in all respects the modern notion of the Sea Serpent, attaining a length of 80 feet. Another species was built like a kangaroo, standing 30 feet high upon its hind legs, which were of service to the animal in wading as it did far out into deep water in search of sea weeds. Its 2,000 grinding teeth were arranged in magazines, and its jaws were shaped like a pair of salad spoons, for picking up the food on which it lived. There were fish-lizards, with heads like alligators' and swimming paddles resembling those of the turtle. They lived habitually in deep water, diving to great depths in pursuit of prey. In order that they might see in the watery abysses, they had eyes a foot in diameter. So numerous were they that their petrified droppings are found in great quantities at this day. A notion may be got of their size from the fact that in a mold made for a cast of one at the British Museum twenty-six gentlemen sat down to dinner.

What the Farmer Can Get Out of Uncle Sam.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY RENE BACHE.

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THE farmer, wherever he may be, can get a good many things out of Uncle Sam, if he goes about it in the right way.

To begin with, if he wants seeds of any sort to try, he has only to write to the Department of Agriculture, asking for them. They will be sent promptly, free of charge, in a bundle marked "Official Business." A request for "some vegetable and flower seeds," will usually obtain ten packages of the former and five of the latter. The vegetable bundle will very likely contain a quart of corn, a half pint of beans, a half pint of peas, and small envelopes of cabbage, pumpkin, tomato, pepper' radish, cucumber, and beet seeds. People often abuse the Government's generosity by applying for seeds a dozen times in a year.

Uncle Sam in 1894 will pay more than $130,000 for seeds and the expenses of distributing them. The object aimed at is that the vegetables and flowers grown in this country shall be as good and pretty of their kinds as possible. The cabbage and cauliflower seeds thus disseminated are produced Connecticut and New York State, especially on Long Island. Peas for seed come from Michigan and Wisconsin. Those got from elsewhere are apt to have worms in them; but the flies of which these worms are the young do not live in the region mentioned. Carrot and lettuce seeds are got from California, cucumber seeds from Nebraska and Missouri, and seeds of corn, melons and onions from everywhere. Beet seeds are imported, and likewise nearly all the flower seeds.

The plants grown from these seeds are sure to be the best varieties known of their kinds. Thus the farmer has an opportunity to start the most highly improved vegetable stocks on his land. If he wants to make experiments with new sorts of crops, which he thinks may grow well, he has only to write to Washington for the material required to begin with. All the seeds are carefully tested before they are sent out, to make sure that they have life and that no weed-seeds are among them. This is done by sprouting samples of each batch in water. Of course, discretion is practiced in the distribution. Tobacco seeds are not sent to the Dakotas, nor are spring wheat seeds furnished to winter wheat States.

Two-thirds of the Government's seeds are distributed through Congressmen, to whom it is as well for the farmer to apply. Each member gets about 5,000 packages. As a rule, they furnish the addresses of the person to whom they want the seeds sent, with free postage franks for pasting on the envelopes, and the Department of Agriculture mails them. A story is told of a green Representative who requested that the seeds composing his quota should be sent to his boarding-house in Washington. On reaching home at night, he found an irate landlady almost at fisticuffs with a driver of a wagon who insisted on carrying up to the Congressman's room about twenty huge sacks filled with packages of seeds. They were sent back.

Useful plants, to the number of half a dozen or so, can be obtained by any farmer from the Government. He has only to write to the Department of Agriculture asking for them, and he will receive them within a few days without a penny's expense to himself. They are distributed for the purpose of enabling people to experiment with them, and, if they grow well, they will afford the finest possible stock to propagate from. Several huge greenhouses at Washington are given up to the business of raising them from slips. During the last year more than 60,000 were sent all over the country in response to requests. Among them were 34,400 strawberries, 15,000 native and foreign grapes, 2,734 olives, 2,696 camphor, 3,000 figs, 2,690 tea, and 3,600 miscellaneous, including oranges, currants, raspberries, coffee, vanilla, black pepper, pineapple, and various semi-tropical plants.

On request, the Department of Agriculture will send seedlings of forest trees and of the cultivated chestnuts and pecans which bear chestnuts as big as horsechestnuts and pecan-nuts four times as big as wild ones, with shells so thin that they may be cracked like peanuts between thumb and finger. Applications should be framed sensibly, however; for some of those received ask for plants native to all zones of the earth, embracing the most northern and most tropical species—to be tried perhaps in localities where few of them could possibly live. But all reasonable demands are promptly complied with. Of late many people in the South have been asking for olives and figs, which grow well in the Gulf States.

Uncle Sam gives $750,000 a year for the support of experiment stations in the various States and Territories, for the benefit of farmers. These establishments conduct such practical experiments in agriculture as are beyond the means and capacity of the average tiller of the soil to perform for himself. Each such station tries to find out what crops and beasts can be raised most profitably in its own particular section. Among other things, they determine the comparative value of fertilizers—in other words, what food plants thrive on best. By trial they ascertain what is the best diet for potatoes, tomatoes, onions, etc. Thus the intelligent farmer is no longer compelled to buy his manures or other enriching stuff blindly.

The modern farmer has reduced his methods to a scientific basis. He recognizes his fields as so much capital in bank, as it were, and knows just what interest he can obtain on the investment. Having cut 5 tons of hay, he wishes to find out how much plant-food he has drawn. Turning to his "Table for Calculating the Exhaustion and Enrichment of the Soil"—obtained by request from the Department of Agriculture—he finds that 5 tons of hay contain 155 pounds of nitrogen, 132 pounds of potash, 41 pounds of phosphoric acid, 8 pounds of lime, etc. Wishing to calculate how much plant-food he will give back to his field with a stated amount of manure, he turns to another table and finds the composition of the different fertilizers at his command.

From other tables he finds out how much food, and of what kinds, will be required to produce a given weight in hogs, sheep, or cattle. All such things are determined with scientific accuracy at the experiment stations by practical trials, thus saving the farmer trouble and money. Government experts have devoted much attention in the arid and sub-arid regions of the United States to ascertain what grasses would grow in such soils. With this end in view, they have sent out skilled men all over the dry belt, to hunt for suitable grasses, with shears to clip off the seed-tops and bags to contain them. The seeds thus obtained have been planted and carefully watched, to see how they did. Those which proved promising have been cultivated for use by farmers.

The Department of Agriculture has been often condemned as paternalistic. That is what the farmers want. They would like to be taken care of in some way, as well as the manufacturers, whose industries are so painstakingly nursed by Congress. To further illustrate what science is doing for the tiller of the soil—it was recently proposed to turn a big lake in California into an irrigation reservoir. Government experts examined the water and found that it lacked the elements required to produce fertility. So the lake was drained, and its bed was turned into first-rate farming land. The area concerned in this scheme of irrigation was as great as that of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined.

Each of the experiment stations is attached to an agricultural college, and for the support of each such college Uncle Sam gives $20,000 per annum. The colleges are for the education of better farmers. They take the farmers' sons and teach them the latest and most scientific agricultural methods. If the boys got the instruction at ordinary educational institutions, they would probably go off into business and the professions. But graduates of the agricultural colleges usually go back to the farms, rendered more practical by the teaching absorbed. In some States the money appropriated for this purpose by the Government has been gobbled by colleges which have created agricultural features on paper for the sake of securing the cash. But the farmers have power enough to put a stop to that sort of abuse with their votes.

Whatever information he desires in relation to agricultural matters the farmer can obtain by writing to the Department, which will respond with private instruction and its own publications bearing on the subject. All the most advanced knowledge is thus on tap at Washington for his benefit. He can ascertain how to destroy noxious insects, to combat fungous diseases of plants, to fight against destructive birds—in short, everything he can possibly want to learn as to his business he can get points about from Uncle Sam.

FACTS FOR FARMERS.

It is estimated that two hundred million more bushels of oats were raised this year than last.

A good milch cow can be profitably kept for milking purposes, until she is eight years old.

Whenever a farmer gets a new labor-saving implement for himself, let him buy one for his wife for the kitchen work.

Save your sunflower seed for the hens. It is not only a good egg-producer, but makes their plumage thick and glossy.

Milk and eggs are sources of revenue at all seasons, and bring in returns every day, where they are properly managed.

Corn is usually regarded as the best food for fattening hogs, but the sweet potato is ahead of it. Corn, however, is the cheaper.

One-third of your crop depends upon the soil, one-third upon the seed, and the other third upon the care and cultivation you give it.

Do not over-feed animals; feed them three times a day, if they are to be fatted for market, but give them only what they will eat up clean.

The Massachusetts Horticultural Society has proved by long experience, that apples grown in grassland will keep longer than others.

Make all stock pens and stables warm now, by stopping the cracks where wind can enter. This is cheaper than giving your stock grain for fuel.

A horse perspires through the pores of its body, like a man; cattle do so only to a limited degree, but hogs only perspire on the inside of their legs.

Use a little of your time and energy this fall in draining low wet grounds; they will probably prove to be rich lands and the extra crop will soon repay you for the outlay.

Do not waste money or time on trees for the home grounds that are of fancy, foreign growthz. By all means plant trees about the house, but give preference to native forest growths.

When you put cabbages away for the winter, pack them closely in rows, cover the heads with straw and put boards over the straw. In this way you will have good cabbages until warm weather.

A farmer who has made great profit on pigs, begins by feeding them daily a cupful of dry oats and peas, besides their milk; then he changes to shorts, then to wheat flour and winds up with corn meal.

By a proper and judicious selection of bees, a very marked improvement in breeding and in honey will be noted among the hives. There is as much difference in bees as between full-blooded and scrub stock.

FARMING THE LOBSTER.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY RENE BACHE.

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LOBSTERS by millions are being hatched out this summer at Wood's Hole on the Massachusetts coast. Government experts have charge of the work, which represents quite a recent achievement of science. The purpose in view is to stock the sea with these toothsome crustaceans, which have been rendered so scarce by over-fishing as to be well-nigh extinct.

The art of propagating lobsters artificially has only been understood for a short time. Nevertheless, it is a very simple matter. The eggs, obtained by fishermen from the adult females, are placed in an ordinary shad-hatching jar of glass. In this receptacle they are kept healthy by a constantly circulating stream of sea-water. The eggs are olive green in color, and, as the time of hatching approaches, the shells become so translucent that the embryo lobsters may be seen coiled up inside of them. They are about one-third of an inch long when they come out. Powdered clams and crab-meat are fed to them, but the most suitable food is obtaided by towing nets of fine gauze along the surface of the ocean. The surface water is filled with life, including many species of little shrimp-like animals, etc. These afford an excellent diet for lobsters that have newly come into the world.

The young lobsters are put into the sea when they are only a few days old. It would be ever so much better if they could be confined in tanks until they reach the age of seven or eight weeks, then letting them go. But this plan is not practicable because they eat each other up. So they have to be thrown into the ocean to take care of themselves at a period when they are the prey of almost every creature that swims. It is doubtful if one in a thousand survives. That is why the lobster-hatching business has not yet earned recognition as a demonstrated success.

The young lobster is not in the least like the adult of its species. It occupies the first few weeks of its life in swimming about at the surface of the sea, affording an appetizing morsel to any fish that may come along. It sheds its skin three times, changing its appearance and structure somewhat on each occasion, until at the end of seven weeks it has attained a form somewhat resembling the full-grown animal. Again it drops its shell, and thereupon leaves the surface for good and becomes a full-fledged lobster, spending its existence from that time forth in walking about on the bottom.

A female lobster produces from 12,000 to 20,000 eggs in a batch. They are attached to her swimmerets. The little lobsters hatched under natural conditions hold on to the mother for some days after they have emerged from the shells. Finally, they forsake her and rise to the surface, where they lead such a gay and dangerous life for a while. Other crustaceans and mollusks also, as well as fishes, prey upon them. Later on, protected by their armor of proof, they have few enemies to fear. They eat flounders and other bottom fishes, and with their powerful claws they readily crush the shells of mussels and clams, devouring the flesh. The big claw of the lobster is for crushing, and the small one for cutting.

Fifty years ago lobsters were sometimes caught that weighed 40 pounds and measured as much as 5 feet in length. But they were nowhere compared with certain extinct species of lobsters which ages ago grew to be 8 feet long and could stretch with their claws 12 feet. The ability possessed by lobsters, as well as crabs, to drop their claws is one of the oddest things about them. The claw cannot be broken off by force without causing the animal to bleed to death. It is by an effort of will that the lobster relinquishes its claws at a moment's notice without suffering any injury. The break always occurs at one point, near the upper end of the second joint, where the arm is smallest and is encircled by a groove. It is said that loud noises, such as thunder-claps and reports of cannon, cause lobsters to "shoot" their claws.

Many people honestly believe that the hatching by artifice of lobsters and fishes is an impious interference with Providence. Attempts have been made to introduce these valuable crustaceans to the waters of the Pacific coast, but not with success. Adult lobsters were shipped across the continent and put into the water in good condition, but nothing has been seen since of them or their presumptive offspring. On that shore some big crawfish are found, but never a lobster. Rocky bottom is the proper sort of place to start a lobster farm, in order that the animals may find suitable shelter from enemies.

The most abundant crabs on the Pacific coast are the purple shore-crabs. They swarm in muddy sloughs of salt or brackish waters, where hundreds of threatening claws welcome the intruder who ventures near when the tide is out. These crabs are only eaten by the Chinese, who spit them upon wires and roast them over a fire. The most ornamental of all crabs is the red rock crab, of vermillion hue, with spines of deep blue color. It is not eaten, but is sold in San Francisco as a curiosity, a single specimen sometimes fetching as much as $5. The red rock crab is found on the Farallone Islands and attains a weight of 7 pounds.

There is a crab in Japan that has a spread with its claws of 12 feet, but its body is small. The so-called painted crab of the West Indies is a land animal. The species used to exist in countless numbers, migrating annually to the sea in a compact army. It has become almost extinct. Another queer crab is the "dorippe" of the Adriatic, which has two legs on its back. If turned upside-down it can run very well that way. One kind of crab is always covered entirely with growing sponge, save only its eyes, antennæ and the tips of its claws. Another, native to California, has a neatly-made snuffbox under its body for holding eggs, which closes with a snap-fastening just like a real snuffbox.

More strange than any of these, however, is the gigantic cocoanut crab, found on islands of the Indian Ocean. It attains a weight of 20 pounds and lives on cocoanuts. Climbing the tree, it plucks the fruit, tears off the outer husk with its claws, knocks in the shell at one of the eyes, drinks the milk and scoops out the meat. For this last purpose it is provided with a long and narrow pair of pincers for a claw. It accumulates great quantities of cocoanut fibre, which it uses for a bed. The flesh is very good, and under the tail is a mass of fat which yields a quart of limpid oil.

Among the queerest of all crustaceans are the "lady-crabs," which are abundant on the sandy shore of the Atlantic from Cape Cod to Florida. They are white, with specks of red and purple on the back. Dead fish are often seen covered with them. If any one approaches, they disappear instantly, burying themselves in the sand. All being quiet again, an immense number of eyes and antennæ are protruded, and presently the army of crabs reappears. These crabs furnish an important article of food in tha market of New Orleans.

Everywhere along the beaches are found the little crustaceans known as sand-fleas and sand-bugs. They are nocturnal scavengers of the shore. They come out at night and eat up whatever they can find, keeping the strand sweet and clean. With a lantern and a white sheet spread upon the beach, one may gather unlimited numbers of them for bait, and for that purpose they serve excellently. Oyster crabs are found wherever oysters occur. They live in the shells of living oysters—that is to say, the females do so. The males lead an entirely different sort of life, swimming about at the surface. Oyster openers obtain them in such numbers that they are pickled for market.

The "horseshoe" crabs are particularly interesting because they are the only survivors and near relatives of the most ancient known type of crustaceans. In Delaware their capture constitutes a regular industry. They are used for manure and for chicken-feed, to stimulate egg-laying. Two millions of them are captured every year in Delaware Bay. For fertilizing purposes they are dried in a furnace, ground in a steam mill and mixed with sodium sulphate, the product being known as "cancerine."

There is a kind of hermit crab in the West Indies that lives on land far from water. It is very large, as may be judged from the fact that the shell it lives in often weighs as much as a pound. At the breeding season it journeys to the sea and gets another shell if it wants one. As is well known, these crustaceans inhabit the empty shells of mollusks, and as they grow bigger they must obtain larger houses. It is a great sight to behold three or four hermit crabs in a bowl with only one shell to contend for. They will use all sorts of stratagems to gain possession of the house, which is so necessary for the protection of the soft hind parts of these animals. In writing on this subject one should not fail to mention the familiar fiddler crabs, which are found in such armies on mud-flats. The burrow of one of these creatures is a vertical hole a foot deep, which then takes a horizontal turn, ending in a chamber where the occupant stays when not looking for food. Fiddlers feed on water weeds. Their most marked charactistic is combativeness.

In Europe crawfish are propagated in ponds, being fed on fresh meat to fatten them. They are also taken at night by attracting them with flaming pine-knots. This crustacean has a long horn between its eyes, with which it impales its prey, be it fish or frog. The worst enemies of crawfish are eels. It is said that great numbers of them are killed sometimes by thunder, though why nobody can tell.

WHY POPCORN POPS.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY RENE BACHE.

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WHY does popcorn pop? Ask the first twenty learned men you can find, and not one of them will be able to tell you. The secret lies in the structure of the grain, which is very wonderful indeed.

In the centre of each grain of popcorn is the "germ" of the future plant. It holds the vital element of the seed.

What is it like?

Well, it is about the size of a large pin-head. Its outer coat is a membrane of woody matter, inside of which is an oily substance containing nitrogen and phosphorus. Embedded in this oily substance is the "nucleus."

The "nucleus" is the true germ—the essential life-principle of the seed. It is chiefly composed of albumen, and is just big enough to be seen with the naked eye. Small as it is, it contains a mystery which no man has ever solved, or is ever likely to solve—the mighty secret of *reproduction*. However, there are more things of interest to be noticed in the outer structure of the popcorn grain.

Gathered around the germ are granules of starch, arranged in layers and so regularly placed as to resemble a crystalline structure. In fact, like crystals, though they are not such, these granules possess the peculiar property of "polarizing" light. Seen under the microscope, they have very beautiful germs. Between each two layers of them is a woody membrane, and covering the whole is the hard external envelope of the corn grain, composed of woody matter with a large proportion of mineral substances, such as lime, silex, potash, and magnesia.

Think what an amazing quantity of nutritious food is thus packed in a little space for the use of the embryo plant, which first absorbs the nitrogen and phosphorus contained in the so-called "germ" envelope, afterwards consuming the starch, and so getting strong and ready to sprout!

A popcorn grain has precisely the same structure as a grain of ordinary corn. It is simply a variety of the same species of plant. Why, then, will not the common corn pop? It will do so, as you can find out for yourself by trying; but it does not pop nearly so well, though now and then a grain will do excellently. The reason is that the starch granules in popcorn are packed more tightly, and the woody membranes between their layers are thinner and more easily ruptured. Heat causes the water that is in the starch to expand, the external envelope is burst open, and the grain turns inside out, becoming fifteen times its original size, or more, and showing the pretty white starch outside.

That is the reason why popcorn pops.

The best popcorn is the light yellow kind, with small pointed grains. Many farms in the West have their patch of popcorn for home consumption, but nearly all of the popcorn raised for market is produced in New England. A story is told of a Massachusetts farmer who had a barn half filled with popcorn newly harvested and "shucked." The building caught fire, the popcorn popped, and an enormous wave of it rolled down hill, covering up the farm-house so that only the chimneys were to be seen, and the family had to be dug out by the neighbors with snow shovels. At present the business of manufacturing buttered popcorn is conducted on a vast scale in Chicago and elsewhere, millions of packages of it being distributed for sale all over the United States.

HAPPY HAPPENINGS.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY ELIZABETH VARIAN.

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HOW many useful inventions have been the result of mere chance it is not easy to conjecture. Certain it is that a number of great discoveries have hung upon a single thread, almost yet not quite perfected, when one little chance, an event in itself most trivial has given to us the invention which might otherwise have been delayed for centuries. Many inventions are the slow growth of ages while others have sprung instantly from the inventor's brain, the result of some happy accident.

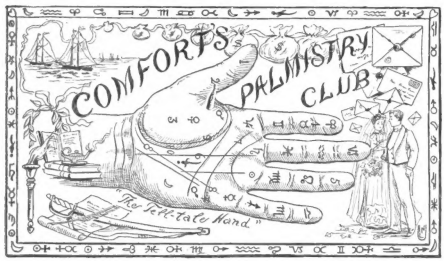
Among the accidental improvers of the steam engine was a fun-loving boy by the name of Humphrey Potter whose duty it was to open the valves for the admission of steam. This youthful genius soon discovered that by uniting the valve by a string to another part of the machinery, the work would be better done and he would have more time for birdnesting. This arrangement, rude as it was, continued for some time until Henry Brighton constructed an engine in which the valves were worked by a rod connected with the beam. Of poor Humphrey Potter, whose genius for fun was combined with so much observation, we hear nothing further. No doubt, he became disgusted with inventing as it brought him neither fame or pelf and robbed him of his occupation.

One day an honest man named Joshua Hellman sat in his cottage in Alsace, with his head upon his hand, thinking over his troubles the greatest of which was poverty. His daughters were many, while his dollars were few and hard to get. Upon this particular day he sat moodily watching his lovely daughters, as they dressed their long golden tresses, their only wealth. As they combed their yellow locks he noticed that they drew the curling hair through their fingers. An idea flashed upon the lucky man. Why could not this process be imitated in dressing long staple (the long thread of cotton, wool and flax), which had hitherto baffled all machinery? He acted upon the happy thought and soon constructed a machine with double action. By one the long fibres were combed out smoothly, by the other the comb was reversed and drew back the short threads. The machine was an entire success, and made the fortunes of both father and daughters.

Once there lived in the city of Haarlem an old gentleman by the name of Lawrence Coster, who kept the keys of the cathedral of that city. One day more than four hundred and fifty years ago he went out to take an after-dinner constitutional, when he chanced to notice lying near a very smooth piece of beech bark. Though the old gentleman was Dutch he possessed all a Yankee's fancy for whittling and upon this memorable walk he cut into the wood several letters. He cut them so well that he was rather proud of them. He took the piece home, stamped the letters upon paper, and gave them to his son for a copy. Afterward he thought a good deal of this little circumstance. He cut more letters out of wood and covering them with ink stamped them upon paper and finally after much work and thinking stamped whole pages of letters; and so printing was invented. But poor old Lawrence Coster had little pleasure from his discovery. One of his apprentices (some people think it was John Gutenburg) ran off with most of his wooden type and the entire pages of a book he was about to print and so got the glory of being the first printer.

Tinted paper was the result of the accidental dropping of a bluing bag into one of the vats where paper was being made. The manufacturer supposing the stationery ruined stowed it in the warehouse for five years, and then sent it to London to be sold for whatever it would bring. Greatly to his surprise it sold exceedingly well. More of the same kind was ordered and tinted paper became the fashion.

The invention of envelopes is within the memory of middle-aged persons and was the result of a Brighton stationer's endeavors to make his store look attractive. He took a fancy for ornamenting his store windows with high piles of paper graduated from the largest to the smallest size in use. To bring his pyramid to a point he cut cardboard into very minute squares. Ladies took these cards to be small-sized notepaper and voted it "perfectly lovely." So great was the demand that the stationer found it desirable to cut paper the size so much admired, but there was one difficulty. The little notes were so small that when folded there was no space for the address, so after some thought the idea of an envelope pierced the stationer's brain. He had them cut by a metal plate and soon, so great was the demand that he commissioned a dozen houses to manufacture them for him. From such small beginnings came this important branch of the stationery business. And yet who says there is no such thing as luck?



CONDUCTED BY DIGITUS.

IT is encouraging to all students of this fascinating science of palmistry to notice how people of intelligence and culture are considering it seriously. Palmistry was so long hidden under a mass of superstition and mysticism that people used to regard it as the black art. One of the most noted writers of to-day recently went to see Cheiro, the author of Cosmery's Guide to Palmistry, and the most noted palmist of modern times, and when she came away acknowledged that she had always connected palmistry with the "black art" until she went to him in London, but after he had fully told her the details of her childhood, described her relation to her parents, the separate influences both had had in her life, and what characteristics she had inherited, she was convinced that palmistry was a science, and that if mothers would take their children to a competent palmist they would get valuable aid in controlling and guiding their lives.

There are many things about palmistry, the ordinary observer may know which will help him to judge of the character of those with whom he comes in contact. I often notice, in a horse-car, the shape of a man's or a woman's hand; and sometimes they hold them, palms open, in such a way that I can easily read their life-history without their ever suspecting it. For instance, a mother sat next me the other day, with a baby of eleven months. I am willing to wager a large sum that the child will not live to grow up, as the life-line was very short, disappearing entirely in the second decade, and the heart-line stopped abruptly under Saturn.

There are many small signs which should be noticed. People with fingers thick and heavy as well as short, are more or less cruel and selfish. A thin, hard, dry palm indicates timidity and want of energy. A thick, clumsy palm tells of brute force and obstinacy. A hollow palm is a very unfortunate sign; people possessing it, though working hard to obtain success, receive but the wages of disappointment. The development of the joints of the fingers and thumb is important. With the first joint largely developed we get ability to reason out difficulties. With the second joint developed we get a leaning toward science. Large hands show power of completion. Small hands denote ideas too large for the person's power of execution.

All these things may be read by an expert without any knowledge on the part of others. Again, long fingers show a love of detail apparent in everything, in the decoration of a room or in the treatment of a servant. Long-fingered people are strict and proper in manner, quick to notice small attentions and have a leaning toward affectation. Short-fingered people are quick and impulsive, they act by intuition, they can't be bothered with little things and are inclined to jump to conclusions too rapidly. They care very much for conventionalities of society.

Then, there are many points worth knowing about the nails. Large nails, bluish in color, tell of weak action of the heart and bad circulation. Thin nails, if small, denote delicacy and delicate health. Fluted nails, particularly if wide and curved toward the top, are indicators of consumption. Short-nailed people are hard to beat in debates; long-nailed people are more yielding, but are more enthusiastic at their work.

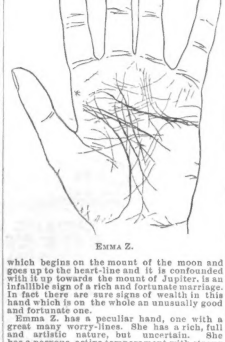
A correspondent wants to know "What is the right signification of a life-line divided in two parts like the accompanying sketch?" As said sketch is not divided at all in any place, it is impossible to know what she means. If it is divided laterally, that is what we call a break in the life-line and means—unless protected by a square or other powerfully good signification, death at the age indicated. If she means another line running parallel with it for all or a part of its length, that is a good signification, strengthening the health and lengthening life.

I have three hands to present to you this month, the senders having complied with all the conditions necessary to secure a cut and reading of the same.

I am sorry to say that a good many subscribers, in spite of all I have said on this subject, continue to send in drawings of their hands without complying with the plainly stated conditions. I am surprised at this. It takes time and serious study to give correct readings, to say nothing of the expense to the publishers of having your hands re-drawn as is frequently necessary, and of having a cut made from the drawing. When you consider that the famous "Cheiro" gets five dollars for merely sitting down and telling his visitors the contents of their palms—which he can easily do in half an hour, the offer which the publishers of COMFORT make you seems a remarkably generous one.

E. A. M. Jr.

E. A. M. Jr. has a hand that indicates good judgment, an even disposition and a nature fond of the artistic and poetic in life and capable of appreciating it, too. On the whole, it is a very good hand, although it is not wholly free from signs of trouble. The temperament, however, is such that its owner will bear manfully and well the ills that befall him and will never give up, discouraged, or cry "baby" as the saying goes. His mind is evenly balanced, well-ordered, neat and administrative. He is probably exact in thought and habit, good in mathematics, with a taste for philosophy, science and moral questions. He has business capacity and respect for authority combined with moderate but excellent positive ideas. He is probably fond of music, also, and of a hopeful nature. A tendency to ill-health is noticed in early life, but the health improves after the age of 25 or 26, although he will never be apt to live to be much over sixty and there will be a general breaking up of the health at that point. The head-line is excellent, going straight across the hand and is clear and well-colored, indicating good judgment, common sense and strength of will. The heart-line is also good, showing an affectionate nature and kindly temper. There is, however, a slight tendency to jealousy which should be guarded against. He has not been, or will not be entirely free from grief of the heart. The position of the Saturnian line,

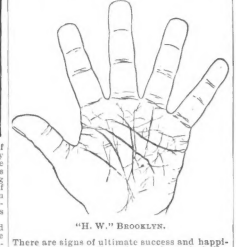


EMMA Z.

which begins on the mount of the moon and goes up to the heart-line and it is confounded with it up towards the mount of Jupiter, is an infallible sign of a rich and fortunate marriage. In fact there are sure signs of wealth in this hand which is on the whole an unusually good and fortunate one.

Emma Z. has a peculiar hand, one with a great many worry-lines. She has a rich, full and artistic nature, but uncertain. She has a nervous, active temperament with strong will-power, as indicated by the shape of the hand and fingers. The life-line is unusually strong with good health from the age of 12 or 14 up to extreme old age. Rays across the hand from the mount of Venus always denote worries and those running to the line of head indicate some trouble of the head at the age signified, which may bring about an illness. A loss of money is indicated by the star in the centre of the triangle of the hand, about this age also, which may or may not be connected with the head-trouble. She will be married once and that at near the age of 25. She is an ambitious girl and will in some degree attain whatever she strives for. She has self-reliance and ability. She will be sensible in her affections and will be guided by reason and common sense. Later in life she will be subject to pitiations of the heart; she will have some unpleasant experiences in love matters, as shown by the many cross-lines on the line of heart. She will, however, be fortunate in the main, and will be possessed of versatile talents. She would, under proper conditions, excel in writing song, play the piano and be generally accomplished, but would divide her attention too much among different branches to excel in any. The split in the head-line, which gives the appearance of a double line some two-thirds of the way across, is a strengthening sign, and will bring good fortune and inheritance. The star on Jupiter's mount also promises good luck and a happy marriage for her love is fascinating, however, may make her enemies. She has a great many cross-lines in her hand, which as I have already indicated, are worry-lines, and in some places form a grill—which are other certain indications of worry and torment, but she has also some excellent signs and will in the main lead a happy and fortunate life.

The hand of "H. W." Brooklyn, N. Y., is also a complicated one, having both good and bad characteristics. Its owner has a practical nature with good common sense and judgment combined with a love of neatness and order and artistic appreciation. If anything, she is lacking in will-power and should carefully cultivate the faculty that old Davy Crockett adopted: "Be sure you're right and then go ahead." She has a good deal of self-reliance, however, and is usually pretty "sure she is right." She will not live to be much over fifty or sixty and will have some serious trouble with the head between the ages of 25 and 30. She will recover from it, however, and enjoy good health for some years afterward. She will be likely to marry more than once and the first marriage will be an unfortunate one.



"H. W." BROOKLYN.

There are signs of ultimate success and happiness, however, so that she need not feel discouraged. The principal advantages of the sciences of palmistry and astrology are that they invariably prove that the darkest day has an ending; that whatever troubles we may have, they are only fleeting and better luck lies ahead. There are several signs of wealth in "H. W.'s" hand.

Now please read again the following offer. I am sure nothing could be fairer.

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